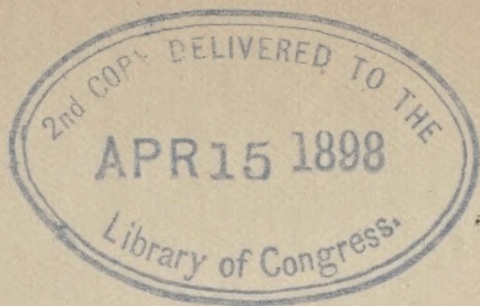


YETTA SÉGAL



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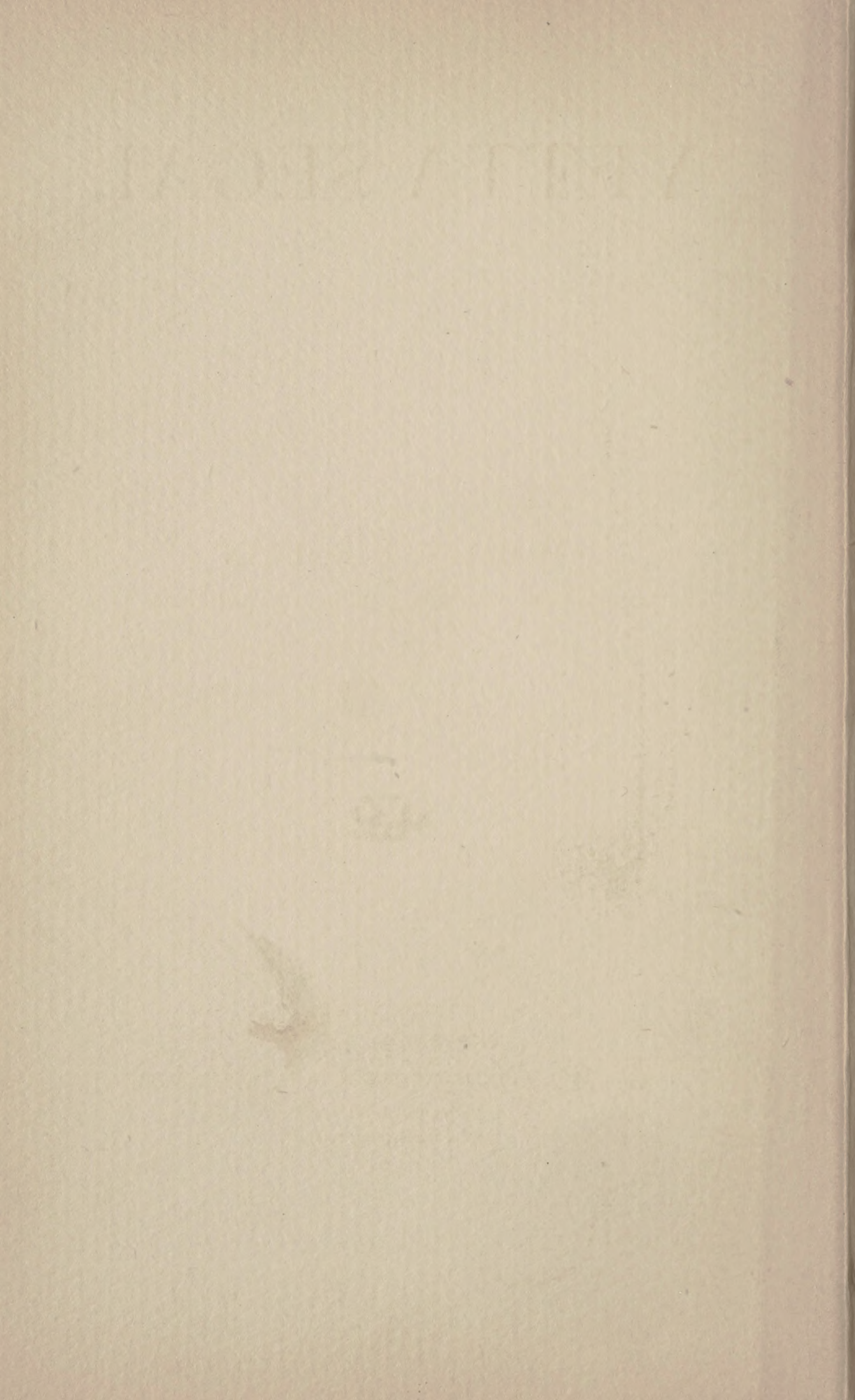


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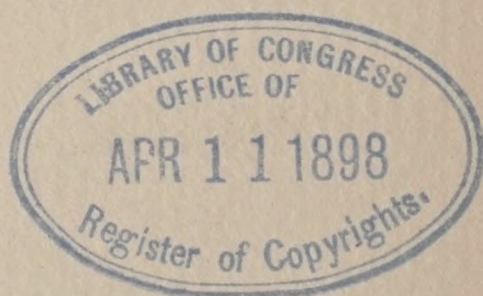
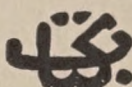
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



YETTA SÉGAL

BY
HORACE J. ROLLIN

AUTHOR OF "STUDIO, FIELD, AND GALLERY"



NEW YORK.

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YETTA SÉGAL.

I.

IN the crisp brightness of a May morning, which had followed a night of copious showers, a young woman, of poise wonderfully in keeping with the refreshed atmosphere and cleansed surroundings, stood on the esplanade contemplating the fountain which is a notable feature of Cincinnati. And as this is a work which any city of superior decoration may covet, it is no wonder that her interest had the glow of enthusiasm.

Besides being æsthetically responsive, this spectator was touched by the feeling which is well expressed in the springing water which falls from the ever-generous hands of that surmounting goddess,—she realizes with the understanding of

intelligent experience that there are many—even in lands of civilization—who should receive kinder showers; and, musing on the practicality of this typical production, she speculates somewhat concerning the relation of the highly artistic to human needs in general.

This philosophic phase of thought, however, being incidental, and lacking the cheerfulness of the morning and the place, was soon dismissed. After a few moments, she moved some distance to the westward of the bronze group and selected a position which was very favorable for viewing the *ensemble* in an effect of misty, sparkling light and vapory, palpitating shadow.

The impression was so charmingly dominating that she was undisturbed by the adjacent sounds and movements. The stirring, noisy animation of the several adjoining streets, and indeed the people directly in front of her—more or less demonstrative—were excluded or subdued by well-regulated receptive faculties; for even the beautifully vague reflections in the wet surfaces had just then more of definition for this accomplished

observer than the strongest accents of the irrelevant.

But the extraordinary enjoyment was soon abated, and then this possessor of increased happiness and power and determination proceeded to the eastern end of the place, where she looked for a car ; not seeing it, she promptly crossed to a small stand and obtained some fruit.

At the instant when she was turning away, three young men came rapidly around the corner, one of whom immediately raised his hat. The salutation of the others, following like an echo, suggested that they might be strangers.

All were evidently of the Jewish race, and the one who knew the lady was the least handsome of the three. His features, besides being strikingly racial, were peculiarly marked. His height was above the medium, and his form exhibited a superabundance of material which did not bear the impress of refinement. Apparently the entire physique was unusually strong and active.

Though the recognition which the lady gave had certain elements of the cordial, to close

observation it appeared modified by a singular reserve—a reserve, however, that was perhaps indefinable if its description depended upon what the face expressed in the way of disclosure.

From this, and from her manner in the matter of willed obliviousness at the fountain, it may be presumed that the individual was capable of admirable self-control.

Now, it is remarkable that in the young man's expression, at the moment when he became aware of her presence, there was something which appeared simultaneously as the foil-like counterpart of her exceptionable yet barely perceptible feeling. But in this instance, the manifestation could have been classified by one of fine discernment.

Values are comparative. After this glimpse of the three faces—which, while decidedly masculine, are, by some psychologic shortcoming lacking in handsome masculinity—the female's is enhanced by an additional endowment. Yet no conscious comparison is needed for this face, as

it already has positive attractiveness, which everywhere maintains itself spontaneously.

The incidental meeting, perhaps more than her physiognomy itself, suggests that this acquaintance of the young men may bear tribal relationship. A slight scrutiny makes the fact apparent that neither the ancestors of this person nor their kinsmen were at the place when its picturesque log structures, as a collection, bore the quaint name of Losantiville.

In the young woman's features there was somewhat of Jewish accentuation, yet not so much as to attract particular attention in a general assemblage. Her presence hardly prompts the thought of race characteristics, or of any kind of prejudice ; but it hints that the clearness of her being, like a pure, placid lake, first reflects in full breadth what is near, with small space and vague presentation for the far-back—a phenomenon which is perhaps characteristic of the dawn of the coming century. Not a few observers find it agreeable to contemplate those cosmopolitan effects which naturally appear to indicate that

types coming from remote anthropoid periods may be passing away.

The attire of this young woman was not only suitable as to common use, but it was so prettily becoming as to be a source of pleasurable interest to the refined. From the shapely hat, with its carefully careless decoration, to the elegant feet, the clothing, though inexpensive, was handsomely appropriate. Even the lunch-basket seemed made to be carried by such exquisite hands, and with that graceful movement. Finally, the sweet adornment on her bodice appeared to be the blossomy complement of an adorable heart.

Her movements, and indeed her general appearance, indicated that the subject of this sketchy introduction was not a stranger in the city by the Ohio.

Within the next few moments she entered a car that was marked "Eden Park." The idea may seem fanciful, but, so far as she was concerned, it might have been inappropriate if the conveyance had been designated as one "for the Garden

of Eden"—a term which may be suggestive of such destiny as probably exerts no centripetal power over this self-willed mover.

Eden Park, too, is beautified with a blossom ; it, also, is embellished by a manifestation of fine taste and good philosophy, for an Art Museum, with its adjoining school, is the object of supreme interest there.

On arriving at this place, the young woman entered the school-building and quietly joined one of the advanced classes, to which she had just been promoted.

II.

WHEN Yetta Ségal was about five years old she was suddenly deprived of both parents by an awful disaster. This left her without a near relative; and unfortunately there was no one of sufficient goodness and intelligence to care for her personally and look after her interests.

The family had been living in a small town in southern Illinois, where Mr. Ségal kept a store. He had considerable means—enough to have maintained the child properly.

It was fortunate for her, as time showed, that just before the fatal occurrence he had deposited a few thousand dollars temporarily in a New York bank, to which concern he was a stranger. The certificate and most of his private papers went the way of their vanished owner, and several years passed before the fact became known to those directly concerned with Yetta's affairs.

Meantime, the situation was very unfavorable indeed for her, and it became so deplorable in its cumulative effects that she narrowly escaped physical and mental ruin.

To have the unhappy chapters of Yetta Ségal's history is not desirable, and a detailed account of this early distress is not necessary—a more important, a more promising kind of realism concerns us.

She was in the immediate custody of those who were hard, selfish, and unscrupulous. This was mostly the fault of a Probate Court which had the elements of incompetency and of indirect, if not direct, criminality; but more primarily, it was due to the conscienceless efforts of a lawyer who—like some of his profession—found it materially profitable to obstruct the movements of equity, to the injury of proper interests, public and private, and therefore to the serious detriment of developing civilization.

A leading and seemingly reputable lawyer of that town where the Ségal property was, and where the little girl still resided, had, for a “con-

sideration," secured the appointment of an improper person to take charge of her and the estate. So, most of the money for her support was diverted, and she was shamefully restricted and oppressed. Her education was long neglected,—that is to say, such education as is nobly desirable; most of the practical knowledge and power of mental vision which she acquired from the human text-book was of a sorry kind.

In many respects this little creature closely resembled the plant which intelligently struggles toward light and air out of dark and oppressive environment—weak in texture, form, and color, and sadly lacking in blooming vitality.

Unhappily, this period extended over six or seven years, and meantime those feelings and cognitions which are generally and somewhat vaguely designated as the soul, were more or less distorted into abnormal conditions.

From her isolation she looked upon many pleasures, that were the helpful experiences of fellow-beings, with harmful suspicion—as those religiously morbid have regarded the beauties

and joyous spontaneity of the natural : laughter, flowers, rational hope, normal satisfaction, all appearing to be but "snares" of that "evil one" who once had desired the unusual condition of a self-satisfying being.

Only, in her case the deprivation was involuntary—she had been all eagerness at first; but later she began to feel that the enjoyment which others had was identified with her want, and so she learned to fear and suspect.

This is no wonder ! for when expectation, confidence, and the semi-reasonable idealism of childhood showed themselves as charmingly as early flowers, they were checked and almost extinguished by a blighting atmosphere.

In brief, no one had the normal care for little Yetta Ségal, which makes existence safe ; much less the beautiful solicitude which makes life redolent.

Through certain incidents, which seemed accidental, a Jewish commercial traveler discovered the identity of this child, her hard situation,

and the fact of the long-unclaimed bank deposit. Having admirable impulse and energy, he soon dispelled the afflictions which weighed so heavily upon Yetta. Not only was she relieved of these, but within a few weeks she found herself in a strange position surrounded by a whole horizon of benefits which converged as naturally toward her as had those overwhelming harms.

III.

A HAVEN was found at Cincinnati, in the home of an old woman whose harmonious heart delighted those who approached her, and whose inharmonious face amused many a one too serious to be agitated by the ordinary ; but to Yetta—who had long shrunk from complex and intricate and blasting ugliness—the features of this marvel soon began, in a way, to appear beautiful. She here learned that such beauty as manifests itself amid unæsthetic configuration is of a far more gratifying order than the physical symmetry which is poorly or badly vivified.

This home—which had no other occupants—was very common, except that it was unusually comfortable ; though small, it was large enough for the growth of such a still and slender child, whose movement had been cramped and whose talent for expansion had been oppressed.

In time she was sent to a primary school, and here, too, there was a period of rather vague experience before the receptive faculties were fairly ready for impressions. After that she progressed at least as well as certain very eminent people did while they were in the miseries of educational day-and-night sweats, longing for a counter-irritant to mis-fit examples from the text-books, which were standard only temporarily.

In a timid way she responded a little to the friendly advances of a few persons—her teachers and one or two schoolmates.

Thus the little girl began the new life, some time passing before she was able to perceive the reality and probable continuance of such good fortune; for she was dazed, and her thoroughly aroused suspicions could not be readily mollified.

But hers was a nature of irrepressible longings, which in some respects had been intensified by the prolonged misfortune. So, presently she began to avail herself more confidently of those opportunities which appeared clear and safe.

Meantime, the way in which Yetta appealed to Mrs. Swartz, was touching :

“Grandma, will you *let* me do that?”

“Oh, I’ll *try* to be very good, if—”

“May *I* play like those children, grandma?”

“Yes, you may, dear.”

“Will no one, *no* one be angry?”

“Little lamb, do not be afraid.” Then the suggestiveness of her smile filled the eyes of the compassionate old woman.

That she showed not the least disposition to excess in her little amusements was truly pathetic—she was fully satisfied with even less than moderation.

In time, there was such happy understanding between these two that a nod responded to the appeal that was expressed by the eyes only.

The effect of such illumination upon those eyes was a wonderful subject to contemplate!

How interesting is the *beginning* of enjoyment! Even the tuning of an instrument may give peculiar pleasure—now, untuned, it is wrong, and

consequently discord is produced by which the sensitive are annoyed or distressed ; but a few touches of intelligent effort bring it into close relations with the finest feelings. Moreover, the conditions of the new adjustment include delightful promise, and exquisite possibility throbs into new life !

Does not the attuning of discordant strings indicate that it is the destiny of man, of the very spirit of humanity, to overcome material as well as psychic maladjustment ? Does it not show that certain of our ancestors—while looking into the future for a fixed existence—were quite wrong in abandoning the physical part of mysterious equilibrium, as a situation wrecked by unnatural storms ?

And, finally, do not the phenomena incident to the overcoming of unhappy material relations declare that the spirit itself cannot be truly unific except on philosophic conditions ? Do not these very conditions comprehend common matter, reasonable movement, and natural interchange ?

IV.

IN a comparatively short time Yetta was fully prepared to enter the intermediate school. Her condition had become normal. In some respects she was no more remarkable than most children who are fairly fortunate ; but in other and very important respects she was strikingly distinguishable. Experience had made her philosophic far beyond her years. Not many mere children look deeply for the conditions of happiness and unhappiness ; not many adults, even, profoundly consider the problems of symmetrical advancement for both individual and society,—and this Yetta Ségal was doing before she was half through the high school. This fact was no more wonderful than the system of cause and effect of which the phenomenon itself was an instance. Her experience—in which suffering had given place to enjoyment—and her capacity for thought, natu-

rally directed her mind into the way of close observation. Besides, she had a decided talent for activity.

In a large city there are numerous object lessons for the student of humanity—the contrasts are painful, startling, suggestive. The field for the meliorist is both extensive and comprehensive.

It afforded this girl no end of pleasure to be identified with the work of a society of philanthropists—the Associated Charities. The management soon realized her great usefulness. She gathered invaluable information. Often she discovered the causes of degrading poverty and avoidable suffering, specified them clearly, and indicated the proper relief. She was a good reader of motives, a ready estimator of ability,—in brief, she was a logical assistant, and in the course of years much distress was mitigated or entirely obviated through her intelligent endeavor.

But Yetta Ségal could not be depended upon to carry “angel-cake” to the prison—she did not

favor stirring the soul by deranging the stomach ; and as for flowers, she trusted more implicitly in the century-plant blooms of steady evolution. She remarked to a certain groping philanthropist : “ The emotion which is not sustained by perennial reason must be dangerous.”

It was not the school-girl who said this,—it was the far-seeing young woman, on the alert for moral deflection, relapse, and ruinous breach of trust. And this utterance came after she had made extended and perplexing search through great libraries for a consistent philosophy of life.

In this search she found little to encourage, much to amaze. There was also some evidence that aroused suspicion. She decided that in order to judge wisely the whole record must be considered as a unit. As she saw that it contained good, bad, and indifferent ; as she perceived that mere glimmerings had developed, in time, into positive light, and that the mirage of ghostly truth had often vanished after a forward movement on the journey,—Yetta Ségal, having the capacity, felt an infinite desire for a system which would

include an explanation of such a phenomenon as the record itself. Perceiving this to be a mirror of successive phases of Man, and that intelligence had been slowly cumulative on the various lines, she saw the necessity of belief in the evolutionary law of life.

In a word, at a time when Darwin was the most abused man on the more illuminated side of the globe, this young person—who, to some light-headed people appeared to be poorly balanced—was wondering as to the next great truth which would come involved in seeming degradation, to spur the laggard on a glorious journey !

As Yetta Ségal ceased to be a child at five, she seldom engaged in play with the children at Cincinnati with whom she was associated ; but she had some pleasure in witnessing their thoughtless gambolings—none the less because there was philosophy in it. While still a child in years, she spent her holidays and most of her leisure hours in contemplating the works of great men and women,—she often played truant from the class

of childhood and went among people of full linear measurement. Enjoying much liberty in her way of living, she even went unattended to the lecture, the opera, the industrial exposition. She sometimes attended public meetings at the great Music Hall. She liked that place. There she often heard the tones of the great organ ; but the compass of that grand instrument was not so full as that of her soul,—for in that were many splendid vibrations not caused by the organ, but by the sublime symphony of her life.

V.

“I’m sure he has questionable designs—I must warn you, my dear girl!”

“This may not be true of him, Doctor Minnem,—at any rate, I am able to take care of myself.”

“But there is danger in hypnotism—except when prescribed by a physician—in small doses,—you know I am a thorough-going homeopathist.”

“Of course, the minimum dose is safer for weak constitutions and the childlike—this must be true especially of hypnotism, since such patients naturally attract it in large doses.”

“Ha, ha! But seriously, Yetta Ségal, I have seen your eye light up when he—”

“Abe Swampstein sometimes shows real kindness,—besides, if his soul is as Jewish as his face, he—”

“Nonsense! I assure you, my little girl, there is much twaddle in that general talk about the domestic reliability of all male Jews—they do not have to be Christianized in order to show the usual proportion of bad individuals. As for Abe Swampstein, I am sufficiently well informed of his ways to be fearful of his influence upon even so careful a girl.”

Yetta Ségal smiled pleasantly, being quite amused.

About the time when she had graduated from the high school—which was when she was comparatively young—it became apparent that several Jewish young men were looking in her direction with characteristic enterprise. The charming embodiment of psychic power is, of course, especially inspiring; and it is not surprising that a young woman of so many admirable qualities as she possessed should inspire ardor in the ardent, as well as respect in the respectable.

As for young men prospecting for happiness,—well, Yetta being so lovable, love appeared amid

her surroundings as spontaneously as dandelions show themselves in the violet-scented groves of springtime.

But the sedate girl was not to be hurried in this matter—she would take time, and be very circumspect withal. Whoever formed an alliance with her in such a cause would discover that she had full cognizance of her preference, and full faith in its duration.

So the lovers, or the would-be lovers, and their particular attentions were regulated becomingly.

But it was not in her nature to remain untouched by a kindness—her appreciation had been too strongly developed by her sorry experience in earlier years with the unkindly to permit such an attitude; so she accepted all kindness with gracious manifestation. But as seeming encouragement was thus suggested to admirers—even those of bad motives—complications arose which were unsatisfactory to others fully more than to herself.

In the neighborhood where Yetta Ségal lived at this time was a family with which she had the

most friendly social relations. Here, in a house that was cordially opened to a general and somewhat varied society, the limited circle of her acquaintance had been extended so that it included the young man Swampstein, among others. A casual glimpse of him has already been had, as he appeared at Fountain Square, on the morning when Yetta Ségal was introduced to the reader.

He had come to Cincinnati recently to live; but it is probable that Dr. Minnem knew his character, for, aside from such special information as she doubtless possessed, to the practised eye, his presence was unmistakably indicative of the gross and sensual.

But her alarm concerning the supposed danger to Yetta was unnecessary, since she was well protected by her sensitive intuition.

Although she naturally wished to avoid giving offense to any living creature, there came a time when the advances (good or bad) of Mr. Swampstein had to be peremptorily checked. Thereafter, notwithstanding her continued kindness,

he felt some embarrassment on meeting her, which was by no means mitigated on his learning that Miss Ségal's shrewd friend had taken a practical interest in the case.

As a little girl, Yetta Ségal had become greatly attached to Mrs. Minnem, for the doctor had treated her (in health as well as in sickness) with exceptional kindness. As women they remained mutually loyal. Miss Ségal made philosophic allowance for the peculiarities of her friend, which were sometimes rather startling ; and she enjoyed it when Dr. Minnem said sharp things about the Jews, even more than when modern Christians were criticised for their wicked inconsistencies.

As a young practitioner, the doctor was so enthusiastically in favor of the small dose that when Mr. Minnem insisted on the large-dose practice in conducting his own case of dipsetic derangement she left him and procured a divorce.

Thereafter, she watched with intelligent suspicion men who went according to the wrong school, in the general practice of life.

Although the action of Dr. Minnem in the Swampstein matter was no real help to Yetta Ségal, she did something involuntarily which the latter claimed had a decided influence upon her, and, indeed, marked an epoch in her study of philosophy.

It was this way: Doctor Minnem—overwhelmed by too hard work during intensely hot weather—suddenly became quite ill, one night. But she did not call a physician, believing that a certain medication would relieve her. So she arose, found her medicine-case and swallowed a minute portion of the remedy. This act was performed in darkness, as the matches were out. It became necessary, however, to repeat the dose, and, within a few minutes, it was doubled. The illness increasing seriously, the amount of medicine was quadrupled, since it was in a comparatively harmless form.

Yetta Ségal lived next door, and being summoned by a servant, she hurried in, like a good Samaritan. When she arrived, her friend was apparently in a very dangerous condition, and sinking. As

yet, no physician had been found ready to respond.

Meanwhile, Miss Ségal, perceiving the patient to be cold, plied her with allopathic doses of brandy. She also applied hot water bags, after the way of a most generous hydropathist ; she ordered steam raised, that the virtues of the "steam-school" might be utilized. She wondered what cunning appliances or inventions would be necessary in order to test the efficacy of the "patent-school" and she even decided to attach a poke-poultice to the feet, strong enough to draw Mrs. Minnem out of bed—and danger. "That," she whispered to the patient's brother, in a manner suggestive of amusement (for the crisis was now surely past), —"*that* would represent the very root of the 'herb-school.'"

"And something 'fetching' might be applied to the scalp," remarked the rude brother, "after the manner of the good old 'Indian-school,' which has been successfully practised in country districts."

"Yetta," said her weak-voiced medical friend

an hour later, "I'll tell you all about it to-morrow—it was alarming symptoms of poisoning."

So, as there were no secrets between the two, it transpired that the doctor, through a mistake which hovered in darkness that was material if not intellectual, had taken eight or ten doses of concentrated medicine, which she kept handy, as a sort of masked battery, to let loose on pathologic intruders that refused to retire gracefully on being notified gently.

When Doctor Minnem gave the promised explanation, the two were riding in her carriage; for she sometimes took her friend to the suburbs, for a ride.

Yetta Ségal put her arm around the doctor and proceeded to give her a breezy lecture on the mistakes of schools in general, beginning with the medical.

"My friend, you should sail under true colors, and pay more attention to the size of your bottle,—you cannot safely reduce the proportions of your conscience.

"Only the common sense requirements of the

case can correctly decide the treatment ; and if a majority of troubles indicate the minute dose, this is a fact which, when identified with a school, must increase the chances of fatal mistake in those instances in which more than a little is imperative.

“If any school systematically prescribes the large dose, it is a pity; for no one—except a degraded druggist, coroner, or funeral director—would persistently recommend the imposing quantity.

“It is remarkable that a peculiarity of one school may be used to better advantage in another. The infinitesimal-amount idea, for instance, more properly belongs to the faith-cure school which is a link (and it is hoped it will come to be a missing link) between the remedies of therapeutics and those of sect.

“If it is true that each phenomenon of the mind, in turn, has a use, it must be true that schools and sects are useful chiefly to the naturally stupid, who, without them, would blunder most egregiously.

“The infinite faculty of common sense enables

us to perceive and utilize the fact which the case requires. This is wonderfully demonstrated in the department of mechanics, and may be in all of the affairs of life, which are improved by the system of reasonable selection and rejection."

Whether Yetta Ségal was right or wrong, the event increased a peculiar tendency of her mind.

VI.

MISS SÉGAL began the regular study of Art for two leading reasons.

She had a strong desire to engage in some congenial work which would have sufficient commercial value to insure independence, as to means of living. The chief reason, however, was the fact that her talent was every day calling for opportunity, all the more because it was reinforced by constant philosophic observation.

Perhaps Yetta Ségal was especially inclined to harmonious art, because she had realized such unhappiness as comes of inharmonious nature. At any rate it was her belief that it is the mission of man, as to general life, to improve the imperfection of common, unassisted nature.

She also believed that although Fine Art is not necessarily identified with the teaching of morality, ethical growth must sometimes be inspired,

and its general adjustment must be facilitated, by the harmony of Art.

Moreover, she had logical hope of practical success, as well as pleasure, in the profession, for the reason that she had seen no works that fully corresponded to her feelings—those feelings which she experienced when in the presence of certain wonderful phases of objective nature.

She considered herself fortunate in having access to the many fine subjects which surround Cincinnati,—the exquisite pastoral scenery of portions of Kentucky ; the charming views along the Great and the Little Miami rivers, the narrow valley of the latter being unsurpassed in its way. And the golden tone of the Ohio at its high stage, with happy complement of color : the peculiar atmospheric effects of the city itself, and the varied figures therein,—all these afforded her extraordinary pleasure and a wealth of material.

These subjects, however, belong to those classifications which engage the attention of intelligent students the world over. Miss Ségal also perceived phases of life which led her into pro-

found investigation of the ideal,—the element which distinguishes the Fine Arts, and which, she concluded, must be a natural force manifested in them.

The philosophic Yetta even went so far as to evolve the thought that the ideal is the basis for all improvement.

“For,” she remarked to her friend, the doctor, after declaring that the human mind itself must open new fields as well as the microscope and telescope, “it is true that the ideality of life is even more astonishing and encouraging than the so-called reality. I am convinced that a mysterious union of the two has been identified with all advancement, since the most wonderful improvements have been made without a set copy !”

At the particular Art School which she attended, she was taught necessary thoroughness without being impressed with academic characteristics. The principal of the school was glad to assist a pupil of decided individuality, one who had native needs to be looked after. By being thus favored, her independence was not detrimental.

She soon realized that in order to distinguish herself it was absolutely necessary to develop those faculties which would enable her to receive and record the unexpected and the spontaneous—spontaneity unclassified, but of a very vital and superlative kind.

“It is of transcendent importance,” she said to herself—and also to her teacher—“that I shall express my own spirit, but not that of a school. Therefore, I shall take no more from Art nor from Nature than is necessary to the force and clearness of my expression.

“How shall I do it? Already I perceive that I must proceed technically in a way that is founded upon my own observation and feeling. The method must be my own, to be of cumulative and culminating value.

“Otherwise, I should have to relinquish somewhat of individuality and development. Neither I myself, nor Art, nor the world in general, can afford to have me do so.”

As for the infinite value of liberty, she had already experienced a shock on discovering that

schools of art, medicine, religion, etc., in order to exist, must have restraining influences at points where liberty brings splendid results.

Yetta Ségal felt that the criticism of schools is in order, and that its practice requires no marvelous knowledge, since the faults of each school, in its turn, are pointed out by representatives of all the others.

On the other hand, she could not fail to appreciate their stronger elements, and the idea occurred to her that they must be useful to the independent worker and the world in general.

“I believe,” she declared, “that fine results may come of a rational fusion of the various schools of Art.” (As yet, this radical investigator had not studied the stock-farm, for the process of cross-breeding according to specific needs would have found significant association in her mind.)

As for the creative power by which the original artist is distinguished, she concluded that it must be gathered eclectically, by a process of selection that may—under certain circumstances—include

fragments of Art, as well as the general material of Nature, and the undefined yearnings of the soul,—all to be glorified by growth unific. Therefore, to be in harmony with the ideal element of Art, this selection logically includes the undeveloped and the more or less vague, wherever found.

It was thus she proceeded, and with gratifying results. Before she had finished her studies at the School, her practice showed a most unusual and exquisite sense of selection.

It will be well for her, indeed, if she can exercise so happily this individual right in all the affairs of life.

VII.

THE theory has been advanced that profound thought, or the *labor* incident to great mental activity, is conducive to facial ugliness,—with the “central-text” indicating that woman, as the “weaker vessel,” should stand off from such a dangerous phenomenon as intellectual strength.

Well, in the instance of Yetta Ségal, this theory of suspicious origin is so far from practical demonstration that, as a matter of felicitous fact, the intelligent have a rare treat in meeting her face to face.

It is well to note her more impressive and distinguishing qualities at this time, for she has finished that part of her career which is commonly called student life, and is taking a place as an active inhabitant of the cosmopolitan world.

The attractiveness of Miss Ségal is by this time so pronounced as to be quite unusual ; and as she

has that peculiar power which meanness shrinks from facing, so she is especially attractive to the noble.

Fully sympathetic, her wealth of sympathy was not impaired by useless and harmful prodigality.

Since the superior qualities of this well-balanced young woman were never manifested malapropos, her truth and candor always appeared truly admirable to those of fine sense of propriety.

Her ideality, though strong, was never unreasonable ; and as applied to Art, it was not of the puzzle variety. For instance, her pictures could not be hung upside-down without an early discovery.

She perceived with wonderful certainty that the ideal has two phases, the abnormal or morbid and the normal, and that each has its counterpart in the realm of real life, so called. She realized that only a strong combination of normal forces can resist the harmful influences of the abnormal ; and for her the term maladjustment had a world of meaning.

Whatever may have been the cause of the fact,—whether it was due to the early death of her parents or to her remarkably broad and non-exclusive mind, or whether there was a union of determining conditions,—it is true that Yetta Ségal was not a strict Jew. Her affiliation with the people of her race was limited—it was not complete in a sectarian way. However, this did not weaken the bond which held her to a number of them. She was particularly attracted to a certain old Rabbi who saw her grow up. As he was identified with the educational affairs of Cincinnati, of course he interested himself practically in her general instruction. The passing away of this kind and able friend was to her a real grief; and she expressed it, now to Jew, now to Gentile, with a feeling that could not show bias.

Since Yetta Ségal was animated with the breath and spirit of modern life, it was fitting, indeed, that destiny soon provided for her another invaluable friend in one who saw neither sect nor race in life's fair field.

It was fitting, too—since her moving spirit was

progression itself—that the coming friend was eclectic to a degree which could hardly be pre-figured by her happiest dreams.

In earlier life, to her the mystery of existence was horrible ; now, it was as charming as her own embodiment of it.

VIII.

ONE fine, fortunate day in early spring a gentleman appeared at Chattanooga's leading hotel and registered the name : John Skoopmen. It is not fair to suspect him because he recorded no place of residence—there was good reason for this.

As a matter of fact, his name was Jan, for so he had been christened, according to the wish of his father. But as his mother was English, and as he himself was born in America, he wrote the name John.

This, however, did not exclude the idea of queerness, for this man was thus identified in the minds of many who gave him passing notice,—and, indeed, this is true of not a few who imagined they were really acquainted with him.

In time (for he stopped several months), he attracted considerable notice. But he did not wish

to be attractive in that way—it was involuntary ; and, strictly speaking, Professor Skoopmen did not think about it at all, for in some respects he was a very thoughtless man. It was this minor fact which secured for him a reputation in and around the city.

At the hotel, although he never tried to find the door of the bar, he often had difficulty in locating the entrance of his own room. But his confidence in regard to the dining-room appeared to be commensurate with the size of the place ; and it is here that we shall see him, not at his best, but perhaps at his worst.

This individual had been turning his face up to the light for at least thirty-five years. During this period his forehead had asserted itself in the facial proportions. He often held the head in a way that made the whole face noticeable for its expanse. So the physiognomist could easily see that the expression of this face was just the opposite of furtive.

His large eyes sometimes appeared fine ; but they were peculiarly and periodically uncertain,

and their close relationship to spectacles which not infrequently were badly adjusted did not remedy the defect. At certain times Professor Skoopmen was indifferent as to whether his glasses were inverted, although they were constructed so that the upper portion reached the far view and the lower stopped short at the near.

A considerable part of the time he was peculiarly oblivious to his surroundings—or environment, as he would have called it ; and as for his attitude toward the people about him, at such times, he might as well have been standing on his head, so far was he from normal relative adjustment. At other times, however, he was more or less attentive, and was very friendly, sometimes to the extent of absurdity. Occasionally his deportment seemed—and doubtless was—inspired by philanthropic motives ; yet he sometimes misled groping humanity.

When in a generous sociologic mood he engaged the attention of the dining-room girls to a degree which the most talented trifler would have applauded.

While in his "spells" of social effusiveness, the Professor frequently was an astonishing spectacle, to say the least of him. Entering the dining-room with beaming face and wilting attire, he would steer precipitately for a table where some of his fellow-beings were placed, and immediately make remarks that were finishing strokes of friendly boldness.

The situation was likely to be intensified when Professor Skoopmen mistook the sex of his fellow-beings, which he often did.

It is, then, not surprising that he remarked to a Chinaman—after a comprehensive glance at his pigtail and trousers :

"I notice with pleasure that your sex is subduing the cranky bicycle—you are quite sensible, too, in donning the bifurcate garments while so engaged. You may be called heathenish by some people who do not know the moral value of equilibrium—profanity sometimes accompanies a fall, even in the case of a woman."

The young ladies, or large girls, in the opposite seats were, to him, nice young men, who, owing

to some freak of fashion, had left their natty hats on their unsteady heads. To show his friendly indorsement of this manner, to appear like one of them, he decided very quickly to leave *his* hat on while he ate.

He was also capable of formulating questions and observations which, he perceived with pleasure, invariably brought, to his side of the table, glances that were full of meaning.

On these sunny days, the smiles he noticed were of a reciprocal nature, most certainly. Under such stimulus he could increase his efforts and become a little jocular, a style of conversation well suited to those young men who wear hats in the dining-room.

“Is there much horse-trading among the young fellows down here this spring?”

“Have you been in swimming this morning? I ventured yesterday—prefer the place beyond the persimmon thicket, as it is secluded and—well, it is ‘altogether’ safer for one who has no bathing suit, ha, ha! Let me anticipate your question—no, I have not read *Trilby*; but a

divinity student explained it to me. I was amused—he took the matter seriously, but I assured him that no form of hypnotism can subvert the American people.

“However, one should be very careful among strangers.”

Once, at least, Professor Skoopmen proved that his sense of the humorous was discriminating in regard to sex if his eyes were not. After flicking a large, ugly and active worm from the attire of a “young man” who sat within reach of his long arm, he rallied after the explosion that followed, and remarked : “Upon my word, your squeal appears to be much like that of the human female !”

But before the dinner-time of next day the pendulum had swung to the other extreme ; and to the few who could perceive that he had no motive whatever in treating his fellow-beings so, the Professor continued to be just as amusing.

But to many he now seemed unfriendly and far from good—his strange glances implied mean suspicion ; his cold reticence indicated belief that almost everybody was in the “bunco” business.

At any rate, he was not pardonable for refusing to answer direct and proper questions.

To some onlookers, the way in which he conducted himself in the presence of women was shameful. If signals were significant, then undoubtedly he insulted the dining-room girls ; and he openly stared for long periods at the most timid-looking and unprotected ladies. Poor ladies ! they were without both protection and reciprocity, for the untoward man was not looking at them at all.

To others, who noted his abstractions, he was unmistakably posing as a great thinker—he might be merely impressing the spectator, or he might be fixing a permanent ratio between gold and silver. Whatever he was doing, the mental process was intricate—because he was queer.

Even if it cannot be truthfully stated, concerning these ungenial moments, that the Professor *held* himself aloof, he certainly *was* aloof.

Sometimes while in his far-away moods he appeared, to the intelligent, so elevated and unapproachable in his isolation as to suggest the idea

of an observer in a balloon, floating at wonderful altitude, serenely contemplating the earth and all therein.

Indeed, some such analogy is needed to describe his attitude, relatively to the people.

IX.

ALMOST every day Professor Skoopmen took a long walk into the country, and usually over the same roads and by-ways. He generally preferred the quiet seclusion of the woodland paths, and occasionally followed for awhile the deviations of a tributary stream. These walks, however, were not mere rambles—they were journeys to and from a certain point several miles from Chattanooga. Whatever the motive may have been, the professor apparently enjoyed them very much. To him the situation, by turns, was conducive to both reverie and profound thought; yet he never appeared so absurdly absent-minded and awkward as he often did in the dining-room of the hotel—indeed, he seemed possessed of harmonious thoughts and was comparatively graceful in movement. This may have been partly because he was alone; but it is probable

that the beauty and general interest of his surroundings toned him up to his best condition. At any rate, whenever he came in contact with others, it was noticed that his words and actions were well regulated. This fact suggested to a few observers who had noticed him in the city that the dimensions of this singular individual had not as yet been correctly taken.

One morning, while loitering in an out-of-the-way place, he suddenly found himself face to face with a young man under such peculiar circumstances that an animated conversation naturally followed. Then, by some inexplicable law of affinity, a mutual interest sprang up. The spontaneity of it was as striking as the dissimilarity of the two persons.

The enjoyable attention which the Professor gave the young man was probably not inspired entirely by the attractive presence of the latter, whom he observed with a peculiar keenness which must have been identified with peculiar thought.

The younger person was a tall, fine-looking man of about twenty-seven. His handsome face

was dark with a tan which must have come from much exposure to sun and weather ; the clothing also indicated an out-of-door employment, but not that of a common laborer. He had large, dark brown eyes, and they were rather singular in that they expressed both alert eagerness and quiet interest—there was in them an echo of some indefinable hope and also of an unusual caution. His general composition included something suggestive of certain figures of Millet—in fact, he resembled in some way a particular portrait of that painter by himself. His appearance did not directly show the effects of hardship, or sorrowful toil, yet it seemed to bear at least the impress of labor more or less pathetic, as if he were descended from a line of serious workers.

It was much more apparent, however, that he had inherited or acquired otherwise a fair degree of satisfaction and cheerfulness.

Presently the young man said, with a manner of charming unreserve : “ If you will come a few rods in this direction, I’ll show you what I’m doing here. There ! I have charge of those men, and

we are engaged upon a work of civil engineering—that is my profession. My name is Alvarez Lanning. I am living in Chattanooga only temporarily ; the truth is, as yet I have no fixed home, nor have I any near relatives. I was born near New Orleans.”

“ Thank you—I feel that we should become well acquainted,” said John Skoopmen, in accents most hearty. But he immediately added, with an air comparatively cool : “ Pardon me, Mr. Lanning, I am interested in learning whether or not one of your near ancestors was non-American.”

“ My mother’s father was a Spanish exile—he too enthusiastically manifested a love for that liberty which he presently enjoyed in America.”

“ Ah yes, I see—when he ‘walked Spanish’ it was in the right direction—ha, ha !”

“ Yes—ha, ha ! sweet land of liberty, indeed ! His daughter ran away with a Protestant from the northern part of this country—my father, John Tecumseh Lanning.”

“ Good—I like that !” exclaimed the Professor.

Then he continued, quite seriously, looking through the upper part of his spectacles to the far-away horizon : “ Let me assure you, geography is a great study.”

“ Permit me to ask you,” said Mr. Lanning, “ is geography in your line of business—I think you are not the gentleman who lately left atlases on trial in our city ? ”

“ No ; nor am I looking up the job of revising and enlarging those atlases.

“ Let me reciprocate your kindness and introduce myself more satisfactorily. I am living here only for the time—am looking after my sister, who resides in a village a few miles from here. She is an invalid, is peculiarly affected, and requires very special treatment. I am conducting the case under the direction of her physician, a friend of ours in the North—Doctor Day and I are associated as professors in the same university. He is generally in his chair, and I am generally out of mine,—for perhaps it would be impossible to sit there always and yet comprehend the hints of anthropology. The trustees,

not understanding the situation as I do, sometimes show inquisitive impatience ; but when I grant them an official interview, they invariably say : ‘ Professor Skoopmen, do come back in time for Commencement ’ ; and I reply : ‘ Gentlemen, the Commencement we always have with us ! ’

“ You perceive, Mr. Lanning, that it is very enjoyable—my salary goes on, and the field is enlarging ; so I need not resign in order to keep a clear conscience.”

Alvarez Lanning laughed lightly, and said : “ Pardon me, but I am reminded of certain intricate questions pertaining to the deflections of the needle—come and examine my compass. You see,” he continued, indicating and explaining the various parts and attachments, “ it is as complete as the conditions of to-day permit.”

“ Certainly you appreciate its perfection—it is your pet.”

They talked an hour longer, first on certain scientific questions, and then, being somewhat

exhausted, they became poetic,—the trees, the stream, the late afternoon sky were considered ; and such features of the landscape appeared to be pleased with the intentions of these awkward lovers ; for the foliage palpitated joyously, the waters supplied the rhythm which these poets lacked, and on all sides came promptings from the light of heaven. In some respects Nature is good-natured—she gives every poor artist opportunity to bestow the right touch, to discover the caress harmonious.

That evening the two parted with considerable feeling ; and this chance meeting was the beginning of a friendship which proved to be truly admirable. On many an evening the young man sought the Professor at the hotel ; on about all the Sundays which the calendar granted did John Skoopmen impress Mr. Lanning for a quiet stroll or a spirited discussion.

Doubtless the mutual pleasure was something more than common. Other benefits were no less apparent. “That Skoopmen” rose in the estimation of at least a part of the public—it was noticed

that in walking he could keep step tolerably well when with Lanning ; and that his face did show gleams of intelligence when the young man talked with especial animation.

As for the latter—as a matter of fact much less obvious—he was somehow inspired by the association ; he observed more carefully, was more precise and exacting, and yet was freer and more cheerful. He had great confidence in this friend. It seemed as if he felt that he was yet to be wonderfully reassured by Professor Skoopmen.

X.

AN accident occurred one day in Chattanooga the tremor of which diverged, extended, and finally agitated several hearts. A young man was hurt in the street, and although the injury was not alarming in itself, a surgical operation was made necessary which involved great danger ; for the patient was already an invalid, and the operation had to be performed at once or death would surely follow.

The young man and his father were guests at the hotel already mentioned, and he was taken there. A surgeon was hurried in, but at a glance he knew that he could not proceed without able and immediate assistance.

“Probably there is not a physician within three blocks,” he said, looking around in unhappy anxiety. Appealing to the clerk—for the patient lay on a settee in the office—he was told that no

one of the medical profession was then about the place.

“Great heaven ! there is no one capable of administering chloroform in this most critical emergency ! ”

The despair of an accomplished surgeon is something to see, and Mr. Lanning did not miss this instance of it. He showed no excitement as he touched the arm of the distressed man and said, with a peculiar smile,

“I believe there is.”

“Who—where ? ”

“That gentleman sitting over there, with the abstracted face and shiny spectacles.”

In an instant Professor Skoopmen had received the surgeon's whispered instructions. He was wonderfully collected and precise, and was prompt withal. He timed the pulse and respiration and noted the patient's fluttering vitality, with the manner of an expert. The two proceeded as one, and the result was complete success.

Just as soon as the work was done, the Profes-

sor and Lanning went out. At that instant the father of the young man came in—he had been retired by the surgeon, because of his distracted condition. He approached in great anxiety.

“Is the worst over?”

“Yes—be calm.”

“Then, Doctor—”

“Blackman is my name—”

“Doctor Blackman, I cannot thank you too much.”

“I appreciate your thanks, perceiving them to be sincere. But I tell you frankly that I alone could not have saved this life—the gentleman who—” looking around, the surgeon failed to see the Professor.

“Let us find him at once,” exclaimed the father, “I will reward him well.”

“He is stopping here,” said the clerk,—“his name is John Skoopmen.”

“Is he a physician?”

“I believe not.”

“*What* is he? I wish to know how to reward him,”

“Well, I think he is a dreamer most of the time.”

The old man did not even smile, but trotted out and down the street to buy his strange obliger a present. What the clerk had said determined him to select a set of novels or a guitar. He proceeded to a place he had noticed, a combined book, music, and picture store. But no set of novels was bought—possibly because the old gentleman could not decide under the circumstances whether the literary treatment should be realistic, to suit the matter-of-fact life-saver, or romantic, to gratify the dreamer. The guitars appeared cheap to the generous mood of this thankful old father.

So he looked around and considered various objects. Finally he paused before a painting, the handsome frame of which pleased him. But the canvas did not give him especial pleasure, and in order to be sure of its value he made some inquiry.

“Is this done in oil?”

“Yes, sir.”

“By hand?”

“Surely.”

“That’s a pity—Americans stand first, you must admit, in the management of machinery. The price?”

“One hundred and fifty dollars.”

“Great Scott!” The shopper quickly adjusted his glasses and looked again—appearing now to have the phenomenal judgment of a painstaking, hard-working connoisseur.

At the end of five minutes, he was still a little alarmed at this suggestion of financial misfortune. Just then the proprietor joined the group.

“Good-morning, Mr. Allen.”

The old gentleman showed some surprise.

“I recognize you as a member of Congress from my former State. You may suspect that this painting is not a genuine work. Now, truly, it is so desirable a picture for one who loves good art that I will buy it back if you are not satisfied.”

Mr. Allen hesitated. What a serious situation it would have been had this person been a woman! But, after all, it is probably not true that “the woman who hesitates is lost.” Perhaps more

of them should hesitate. At any rate,—unless the “higher criticism” of a certain history is infallible,—the mother of them all was lost without hesitation. And if this had been necessary to complete the process, it is likely that one of the males, Adam, Jehovah, or Satan would have coerced her.

“Well, here is my card ; put it on the package and deliver to Mr. Skoopem, at the hotel—it is a present—he saved my boy’s life—but—say ! Anderson, isn’t the price a little steep ? ”

“The artist has had more for works not so fine as this—and my commission is only fifteen per cent, while some dealers have twenty or more.”

“Fifteen per cent ! Why, six ought to satisfy any honest man.”

Mr. Anderson was not dashed. He knew from private sources of information that Mr. Allen was an active member of a great “trust,” the profit of which sometimes dropped as low as ninety-five per cent. But he continued to address him as a Congressman who championed the cause of Humanity.

“Well, well, here’s my check.” And the stirring member of society hurried away to be with his boy.

It was a good thing for the Professor and the artist—and, indeed, for Mr. Allen himself, that he did not wait a few hours for the subsidence of his emotion to its usual stage.

That same eventful morning, Doctor Blackman, seeing Professor Skoopmen and the young man passing his office, hailed and thanked them most properly. He then more fully perceived that they were gentlemen of his kind, and that the Professor was doubtless a remarkably bright man in his way.

“Now, gentlemen, excuse me for the present, and do me the favor of dining with me to-morrow evening. My wife and children are away for a week or two—they’ll be glad to meet you later. Thank you—don’t fail. Till we meet again !”

The gentlemen were a little surprised and considerably interested on learning, incidentally, that

the two sisters of Mrs. Blackman held sway in the doctor's mansion during her absence.

So, at the appointed time they appeared there in full dress, boutonnière, and smiles, and with conversation that engaged because of its fine sparkle. Professor Skoopmen was all attention, and the brown eyes of Mr. Lanning were nothing if not sentimental.

The young ladies were vivacious as well as accomplished. As time showed, they were habitually and unrelentingly captivating—two happy marriages came of this meeting, within a year. The reader should not be misled for a moment,—these daring gentlemen escaped; but two of their friends (including the northern physician who came down to attend the Professor's sister—a flying visit indeed!) were captivated completely.

As for John Skoopmen—well, he had the painting to enjoy; and as for Alvarez Lanning, he was delighted with the Professor's conversation about this work of Art, and also with a discovery which he made when he inspected the picture.

XI.

“Ан, Lanning, old fellow! come up to my rooms and see something beautiful—this way, shun that elevator,—if you are as heavy and slow as it is, attach yourself to my coat-tail.”

The young man was confident that his friend's unusual buoyancy was not caused by a pretty campaign-badge, nor by a female candidate's letter of acceptance. The beautiful thing to which he referred might be in the nature of a scientific discovery, or a philosophic essay. Professor Skoopmen's idea of beauty was probably as queer as himself. To him, heaven itself might be a place where disabled angels are repaired by a “nice operation”; or where intricate social problems are solved only after painful anxiety and great effort.

So Lanning was a little surprised—and agree-

ably—on finding that the “something beautiful” belonged in the department of Fine Arts.

Professor Skoopmen had not yet hung the painting—he had improvised an easel by pulling out the drawer of a large bureau, on which the picture was placed. He had shaded the lower parts of the windows, so that it was well lighted from above.

“Here, Lanning, take this chair—no, don’t go near that canvas at present, you may study the material execution later—let your first impression be of the whole effect. There is always a peculiar pleasure attending the first sight of a good original work.”

“Who—”

“Beg pardon, but do not ask that question now,—I don’t care who painted it. Too much of the regard and judgment in the Art world begins with an interrogation point, and it is a great pity.”

“But I think I recognize this style.”

“Perhaps you are mistaken—the name appears to be foreign, and I haven’t yet made it out,

quite. But the subject is evidently American. I did not suppose there was so good a picture in this city—it must have been brought here by accident; at any rate, I came into possession accidentally—it was presented by Mr. Allen, whose son was saved this morning in the nick of time.”

Mr. Lanning thought the picture was unusual and fine, but he was not so enthusiastic as his friend, perhaps because he was unable to be so. In fact, he had had but little opportunity for the development of the art-faculty; but he had fair natural capacity to enjoy the beautiful.

The occasion gave him one more reason for admiring the Professor, whose apparent knowledge of and feeling for Art was a matter of new surprise to Lanning. The latter was much interested in learning that the Professor had given considerable attention to the subject of painting while living in the large cities; and that he had associated a good deal with certain distinguished artists—was personally acquainted with some of the great painters of France and the Dutch coun-

tries. The association had left its impress upon him.

The work which these gentlemen viewed was, in subject, a combination of landscape and figure. The time of day was early supper-time in the country,—that is to say, about five o'clock. The back yard of a farmhouse occupied the foreground, and this—which was a hillside—was crossed by a rambling and altogether picturesque fence, an uneven stone wall, with rails added here and there. A little to the right, the figure of a twelve-year-old girl was poised lightly upon the top of the stile. The head was uncovered, but she shielded her eyes from the direct sunlight with her left hand, while with the right, high raised, she waved a white handkerchief. Probably she was using her voice also in giving the supper signal to the harvesters in the valley, a little to the left.

The hair and general outlines of the figure—which was in fine opposition to a remarkably well-managed background—were highly illuminated by the sunshine. This strong light came

through the thin, scant skirt so that the lower form was defined more or less clearly to a point above the knee,—it was the elegant slenderness and the graceful pose of this part of the figure which made the composition especially striking.

The action of the figure was free and charming. The beauty of line throughout the entire work was not more remarkable than the values of light and dark, which were carefully established and well maintained. There was a fine sense of the open air—even the foreground was invested with an effective atmosphere. In color, the canvas was certainly notable.

“Lanning,” said the Professor, in his happiest accents, “so good a work is not produced without unusual knowledge and feeling. Considerable experience, also, is required for such execution—this is superior texture.”

“No doubt it is. I like the picture very much, but I think the coloring is rather weak and cold.

“Of all the fine qualities,” said the fortunate possessor, “the color, in my opinion, is the most admirable. The tone is not cold, but cool ; yet

it is alive with an exquisite glow, which is quite different, of course, from the conventional hot flush.

“While the drawing is remarkable in style, it is subordinate to the color, as it should be in painting. Sculpture is complete in itself; certain highly artistic motives may find full expression in black-and-white work, wood-carving, and other arts,—but painting is distinctively the art of coloring. There is such a thing as the ‘magic of color.’

“But no matter what the medium, the aim of High Art is to manifest something of the ideal. To the essence of exterior Nature must be conjoined the essence of the artist. Unity comes of such inspiration.

“If you do not know what Art is, my friend, you cannot realize that such artistic creations as this are more true than common reality.

“In the life of these trees and fields, as well as in the figure, there is a suggestion of transcendent beauty.

“Such facts are hard to comprehend, since Art,

no less than Existence itself—of which it certainly is a natural phase—is mysterious.

“But,—to return to something more easily understood,—I assure you that this picture is peculiarly admirable because, so far as I know, it does not show the influence of any particular school or master. It is perhaps more thoroughly cosmopolitan than any work I ever noticed. Here the artist has revealed qualities both original and eclectic. I’d like to be personally acquainted with him.”

“Professor Skoopmen, why do you assume the painter to be of the masculine gender?”

“Oh, really, I do not,—a work is not necessarily masculine because it is strong. Poetic spirit, artistic conception, technique,—these are not monopolized by a sex.”

“Although I have never seen this painting before,” said Lanning, “there is something familiar about it. Let us discover the identity of the artist,” and examining the canvas eagerly he read the name: ‘Yetta Ségal.’ I am not disappointed.”

“Evidently, then you know something of this person.”

“I have known Miss Ségal about a year, and it is a pleasure to believe that we are pretty well acquainted.”

“This is interesting, indeed,” exclaimed Professor Skoopmen, “Let me ask you about this artist,—where did she study, where does she live? Is she French? I suppose she is not young, and that she is as ‘queer or crazy’ as unusually capable people are said to be,—do impart your valuable information.”

The young man smiled very properly, and looked with increasing admiration at the painting, which he thought was improved in warmth by the somewhat changed afternoon light. He hemmed a little, preparatory to speaking, probably thinking it would help the nervousness of his vocal organs. But he immediately took the better course for relief, and said :

“Yes—well—this person, who is comparatively young (she is at least a few years younger than I), has lived and studied chiefly at Cincinnati, I believe. She is a Jewess, but—”

“Good!—I am much pleased!—it will be a fine trouble!”

Lanning looked at the Professor in surprise, but perceiving that he was serious and somewhat abstracted, made no reply.

“Miss Ségal has a friend in this city—a Mrs. Frank—who also studied Art at Cincinnati; and when she visits here, the two paint together a good deal, and sometimes they explore the country for subjects. I first met them in a remote corner of Tennessee, under peculiar and quite amusing circumstances,—it was an encounter between their sketching-party (a few pupils accompanied them) and my surveying-party. I and a companion were subsequently asked by Mrs. Frank to call on the ladies at her house in this city. I have seen these people, here and there, quite frequently; and I think I can say that there is a mutual friendship of which I may well be proud.

“By the way, Miss Ségal is coming here in a few weeks to stay awhile. I shall be glad to present you, Professor, if agreeable to her, and

no doubt it will be—this person is approachable as well as irreproachable.”

“Ah, Lanning, you are sure that I shall be delighted to know one who can give such impassioned interpretation of Nature. And this is a *young* person, who already possesses the key to that heaven from which no infinite creator can be barred!”

XII.

MISS SÉGAL appeared in Chattanooga soon ; but as the Professor was called away from the city for several weeks, he did not immediately realize his pleasant anticipation. And the young lady felt some disappointment, since she had been informed by Mrs. Frank, concerning the beautiful expressions of that gentleman in allusion to her work and herself.

But Mr. Lanning was there—when it is a matter of fate, the program is realized with surprising fullness, the intelligible, the mysterious, and all.

These well-equipped young people proceeded very pleasantly along the road that led to their destiny, for they were responsive to many of the finer harmonies of life, which adorn the way for those who are truly impressible and protect it for those who are intelligently creative. As for any destined sorrow—well, it would develop and

manifest itself duly without effort on their part ; they are now only busy with the happy accumulation of certain forces, the true value of which would be rather troublesome to appreciate, even if correct pre-valuation were possible.

At Mrs. Frank's, and elsewhere, they saw each other not infrequently. It was generally in the evening, when they were included in a group of congenial acquaintances, at a little party or musicale,—for during almost every day each was earnestly engaged professionally.

Presently, however, the acquaintance became so important that a holiday now and then was not unreasonable. Usually on those occasions a party of them took an excursion into the country (looking for motifs, specimens, and the like). Once they went as far as the French Broad for a few days of camping, with which, of course, the poets and painters were especially pleased. And the tents were pitched at a place very favorable for those who were troubled with incipient love—the location comprised an outlook of such distance and grandeur that, if the sufferers were merely

weak, they might safely recover ; and where, also, the bad cases might progress till death,—for there is, universally, so much of recovering or dying in the complications incident to love !

It goes without saying, that any real gentleman could be depended upon—at a moment's notice—to open the inner door of his susceptibility on having received no more than general impressions of Miss Ségal.

So the important question is : which one among a whole troop of suitors is in fine trim for the inspection, in proper condition for the grand review ?

Not that she was disposed to be hypercritical or exacting. And as for cold calculation, such a woman never trained in that school. She was philosophic, and therefore liberal. But her fine feeling for life and art permitted her to choose only the harmonious.

As a good eclectic, her choice was liable to comprise what the world might call the ineligible.

At Cincinnati, when she had finished school, one of her people proposed to be her husband,

She saw that he was an intelligent man, and a kind one in his way ; but in her heart she felt that his devotion to his syndicate and his synagogue was more strict than the requirements of perfect comradeship and good citizenship indicated. Her answer to him, however, was a sufficiently comprehensive explanation : “ My good friend, you are at least fortunate in learning that I am hardly fit to be your wife,—I have no desire to marry—I care more to develop as an artist, and I shall extend my studies outside of dear old Cincinnati. As for you, you would better study this city and all therein more closely than ever, for there is a lovable girl here, who I know, entertains a fine affection for you—the Rabbi Adler’s daughter.”

“ Oh, Himmel ! you don’t know that her elder sister eloped with a Christian ! ”

“ Well, the good Rabbi could not help that ; and the sister will not do so if—no matter ; but it may be your duty to assist in maintaining the religious integrity of that family.”

Miss Ségal had several pleasant acquaintances

and a few good friends in Washington City, and one of these was determined to win the prize—till he learned from one of her companions that she was a Jewess, and then he hesitated.

If there had been no other obstacles, that silly fellow might have eaten ham sandwiches with our Yetta Ségal !

She encouraged no admirers, yet wherever she became well known, would-be suitors appeared. And some of them were very eligible, too, in a general way.

As for Mr. Lanning,—well, her Art had not been neglected as yet ; but she liked him better than any one else.

He perceived that his presence was agreeable to her, but his rare perspicacity assured him that he must avoid even the appearance of haste. Feeling that he could be entirely acceptable to her only after she had acquired adequate knowledge of him, he was willing to allow the requisite time—doubly so because it would be felicity of a pecu-

liar kind to have the season of discoveries extended.

Moreover, it had been his plan to delay marriage till a fair income was assured ; and, also, he found that he could secure a higher grade of work, with more profit, by operating in a district so large that he must occasionally change his headquarters. He had started as a surveyor, but was aiming to develop the business of a civil-engineer.

Miss Ségal learned that a number of his friends and admirers in city and country were organizing to secure his nomination for the office of county surveyor. She asked Mrs. Frank to urge him to go before the approaching political convention.

He did so ; but the course he took was a surprise to many. The name of Alvarez Lanning was proposed first, and it was received with hearty applause by the majority. But he immediately arose and said,

“ My fellow citizens : In these times of political ferment I have caught the infection, and I

must make a little speech. I do not begin by saying that I am totally unprepared—for I am all ready. Nor is this a great surprise, since a large committee informed me last Sunday morning. I am not disabled by emotion, but can say very readily that your appreciation touches me deeply—it goes all the way down to the bottom of my heart, and were my heart in my boots (which it isn't, with all this backing), why, your kindness would reach it.

“I do, however, need your assistance. Help me, like good fellows, to withdraw. Having the floor, I present the name of Mr. Dill, the young surveyor. He is thoroughly competent, I know, and as for his honor, the needle will never be deflected from the true direction. If I may anticipate your admirable action, let me thank you, for him—he cannot make so good a speech on this occasion as I, for obvious reasons. Gentlemen, you have my gratitude.”

The newspapers contained the speech, with mention of “laughter,” “applause,” and the final “three cheers for Lanning.”

When he met Miss Ségal and her friends, they were full of reproaches. But he was ready on this occasion also.

“Let me explain that,” he said. “This young man, who is able and true, really needs the office, while I do not. When I heard certain reports, I called on his mother—a widow, with silvery hair, and a form bent with age and hardship—a very charming person, and charmingly wrapped up in her ‘John Henry.’

“Now ladies, if—”

“Mr. Lanning,” said Mrs. Frank—“not another word—we do not care for your speeches; and, for heaven’s sake, do not try to become an orator, nor a politician.”

Both ladies made a great show of laughing, to hide their tears.

There was also a circumstance which enabled his friends to estimate his character on a somewhat different side. A society of poor negroes, wanting to own a church-building, procured a small lot in the environs of the city, on which to place one. But there was a dispute about the limits of

the ground, and as Lanning's attention was called to it he investigated the matter. An imposition was discovered, and he championed the cause of the society, which was thus enabled to maintain its rights. And he made no charge for his services.

In this there was nothing very unusual or heroic. An incident followed, however, which was interesting, as it brought out his views concerning human progress in general.

This same society had put up its cheap little building rapidly,—if the process was not protracted, the revival-meeting which followed the dedication was.

One fine evening—when the moon and the meeting were at the full—Lanning and a dozen others (a happy thirteen), out for a suburban stroll, approached the little church. They had been drawn to the place by a simple song, rendered with the Afro-American tone and harmony.

The party stopped on a little knoll, from which the congregation could be observed through the open windows.

After the song, and when the powerful exhorter was well under way, a pertinent conversation sprang up in the party.

“This poor little out-of-the way place,” remarked an elderly gentleman, “reminds me of what I heard Mr. Beecher say in the pulpit. He came out squarely and said that even in regard to church affairs we do put the poor, obscure people in the kitchen.”

“It does seem too bad,” said one of the ladies.

“I think it is not so bad as it may seem to some,” observed Mr. Lanning. “Indeed, it is strange that one of Mr. Beecher’s intellectuality should make such a remark.”

“What is that, Lanning? Explain yourself, if you can.”

“My mother had a book of his sermons, by which I saw that he was progressive and somewhat heterodox—he evidently entertained ideas of natural evolution.

“Now, as a matter of common-sense,—and it is a poor system, isn’t it? which is not characterized by common-sense,—these simple wor-

shippers are better here than they would be included in one of the fine, fashionable congregations."

"That's right, sir—keep them in their place," said a gentleman from Georgetown, a cousin of one of the ladies.

"No, sir—not at all. As I was saying,—they are more at home here ; and if it is a question of growth, they can develop better here, up to a certain point, than elsewhere.

"All under heaven I ask for them, or for any, high or low, is that there be no obstacles placed in the way—that every one shall have full opportunity to get from one class into a higher. These poor souls have their own kind of enthusiasm, and are working perhaps with all their might while 'climbing up the golden stairs.'"

"Ha, ha ! good for you !" chimed the chorus.

"Mr. Lanning is right," declared Miss Ségal.

"He is hardly ever very wrong," laughed Mrs. Frank.

"He ought to join an endeavor society and do something foolish," said the dashing Miss La Rue.

“Miss Ségal won’t let him,” declared another.

“But, as a matter of fact,” said the young Mr. Spiker, “the half of those old deacons over there in the amen-corner are irrepressible chicken-thieves.”

“Ah, ha, ha !” they all laughed.

“Why, that old ‘un’ in the front seat,” continued this youth, who was a capital mimic,—“the one with the implicit countenance—you should hear his confession of faith.”

“Ha, ha ! Let’s have it.”

“I asked him, ‘Uncle Jeems, do you really believe in the efficacy of prayer?’

“‘Yes, sah—yes, sah, I duz, sah—I duz raley b’leeve in dat so’t o’ prar, sah. But (scratching his head and appearing thoughtful), ‘it ‘pends er heap on how de prar is said, sah.’

“‘For instance, Uncle Jeems.’

“‘Foh instunce, sah—w’en de times am hahd, w’en I’s e outen wuk en nuffen on han’ ter eat, I hev offun prayed in my cabin at night fer de good Lawd ter sen’ er chickun ter me. I offun hez set up all night er waitin’ fer dat chickun—ah, sah,

de stray chickuns dat cums ouh way en poo' times is mighty skace, sah.'

" 'Yes, of course.'

" 'Coas, sah,—but ef I pray *fer de Lawd ter send me arter de chickun*, dat prar is ansuahed, sah, afore sun-up, sah.' "

They all had to laugh heartily, even Lanning, who said :

"At least, he is reasonable,—and his religious philosophy is not so different from Emerson's, after all."

"And it is quite plain," said Mrs. Frank, "that these deacons are really not fit to go to any of the great, modern, opera-like churches—they'd certainly be out-classed !"

"Ha, ha, ha ! You are as bad as Spiker, only on a grander scale."

"Oh, yes—we are all bad—but Lanning—he is good and serious."

"It's false—the de'il is in me, and I feel like laughing, ha, ha !"

The party strolled on, lively with chatter and fun.

It was not only Alvarez Lanning's views concerning important sociologic questions, but there were many facts by which Miss Ségal knew he was a wise and practical philosopher. He was not one of the conventional kind—he was possessed of ability to see all the way through to a comprehensive and relative position. She admired his fine synthetic mind, which enabled him to escape the cul-de-sac of short-sighted divergence, and various dilemmas which even keen analytical observation cannot avoid.

In brief, she perceived that the list of his admirable, enduring qualities was not a short one; and as she appreciated these fully, and valued his worth truly, her unusual regard for Mr. Lanning was an outgrowth both philosophic and natural.

Indeed, all the circumstances made it a lovely as well as a reasonable regard; and so, when one sweet day the air—from the ground to the upper atmosphere, and beyond into divine reaches—was full of a spontaneous symphony, Yetta Ségal's fine soul thrilled its beautiful accord.

The situation, however, gave her some trouble, in the way of anxiety. On account of her profession, she desired a few more years of single life. Yet she felt that with the exercise of will-power there would be no serious interruption to her progress as an artist. Besides, she considered that she was already fairly well established. Her work was of that kind which not infrequently sells itself. Several pictures had been disposed of within the past two years, so advantageously that something of the proceeds was intact, after meeting her expenses. And her patrimony had been kept in good condition. While it was not large, well managed it would insure a moderate living even for two persons. And Mr. Lanning would not undertake to husband her resources,—he considered himself highly fortunate in being permitted to husband such a woman. He had business of his own to look after, from which he had put aside a little capital. Miss Ségal could agree to an early marriage because the man of her choice was both enterprising and careful. Apparently, he embodied the elements of success—and more than the mere financial kind.

XIII.

MEANTIME, Professor Skoopmen had returned to the city ; and within a few months the young lady and he had become the best of friends. Miss Ségal understood and respected him fully. As for the impression which she made upon him, it is enough to say that he was in no wise disappointed.

There was mutual regret, therefore, that circumstances did not permit the continuance of this happy personal association. But the invalid sister of the Professor was by this time almost recovered, and he was nearly ready to say good-bye to his dear friends and move northward.

It was his intention to sail for the Orient within a few weeks, there to complete certain peculiarly interesting studies in biology which he had begun with some timidity and hesitation the year before, but which had progressed with such flattering

success that he was determined to continue with all his heart.

When he mentioned the proposed trip to the trustees of his university, they protested with the usual vigor.

“Now, Professor,” said one in the meeting, “it does appear that you prefer to live at any point of this big round world but right here, the home of the school and the proper abiding-place of the faculty.”

“Gentlemen, the difficulty is not serious at all, and I give you notice that I shall not resign. My assistant is fortunately supplied with useful manuscript and so forth. The work is progressing. Therefore I have this to say of my Oriental visit, I’ll pay my fare out, then if you want me to return, you will remit the necessary funds.”

“The proposition is not satisfactory,—here, Secretary Baker, write a check payable to Professor John Skoopmen.”

The Professor had passed a few days and nights at the village cottage of his sister, and had returned to his hotel in the city to prepare for final departure.

He endeavored to see Lanning, but failed. Supposing that he was busy with some work—possibly out of town—he waited a day or two. Then he called at the private boarding-house where his friend usually stopped, and there learned that Lanning had suddenly gone away one evening, baggage and all. His manner seemed unusual at this time. He appeared to be ill or distressed with some trouble. The folks here—who were apparently much attached to him—naturally supposed that he had gone out of town on business. A week had passed since the departure.

Professor Skoopmen sought Miss Ségal, as the one most likely to be informed, only to find that she knew nothing definite; he had made an appointment for a certain time, but he neither appeared in person nor sent a note, or any message whatever. It was so unusual, she said, as to be suggestive of some kind of trouble. Yet she believed that a proper explanation would soon be forthcoming.

The Professor strolled back in the direction of the hotel, reflecting. Presently he turned and

proceeded on a road leading out of the city, for he remembered that Lanning had been doing some work in the outskirts,—he had said, however, that it was suspended for a month.

Professor Skoopmen had nearly arrived at the place when he noticed a man walking just before him whom he recognized as one of Lanning's workmen. Before this person was overtaken, he entered a house which was the last public place in that unattractive district—a small cheap tavern, resorted to chiefly by common peddlers, drovers, and people of that kind.

The Professor followed the man in, and found him at the bar, taking some beer. As the drinker might loiter for an indefinite time, he was approached at once. He recognized the Professor as a friend of his employer.

“Mr. Skoopmen, good evening. Will you take something?” He was one of those persistent men who lose no opportunity to treat or be treated.

“No, thank you—I—”

“Oh, you are welcome here—that card is no holy terror for white people.”

A card on the wall bore the regulative announcement, "No niggers need appli."

The Professor was disgusted, but not surprised—he knew there had been a clash in that disreputable neighborhood between some ruffians of the two colors.

"Let me ask you—is Mr. Lanning engaged in any work in or near the city?"

"Yes, that is, he will be to-morrow. We are to finish the job out here now—sooner than we expected."

"Thank you, I can see him there and then, if not before."

"I think you can see him now," said the bartender, "he is upstairs, front—Mr. Lanning is stopping with us," he added more brightly.

There was no longer a doubt in the Professor's mind as to there being serious trouble.

"Please say to him that a friend wishes to see him about an important matter."

As the messenger proceeded, Professor Skoopmen expedited the movement by pressing closely upon his heels.

He heard the uncivil engineer refusing.

“I am engaged, and must be excused.”

“I say, Lanning, old boy—you must be fully occupied, indeed!”

He went quickly and put his hand on the shoulder of the young man, who was ostensibly busy at a table with a chart.

At a glance he noticed Lanning's disordered and generally wretched appearance.

The bed was in a condition no more presentable than its very recent occupant.

With careful propriety, the kind professor gave his friend opportunity to speak first concerning the situation. Lanning, however, was non-committal and moody.

“Pardon me, my dear friend,—but I have come to say good-bye; sorry to see you are not well.” The professor meant psychically, for the most part, but he did not say so.

There were a few moments of silence, and some embarrassment, of course. Lanning, apparently perceiving that he must say something, began :

“I—I am going away, too,—the idea occurred to me that I might write to you, and—”

He stopped short and looked out of the window.

“—and to—to Miss Ségal—some kind of an explanation is due her, though the heavens fall.”

“Lanning, the heavens have often been bolstered. I am fully aware that something serious has happened. You know me pretty well,—I am not merely inquisitive. I may be able to help you, and I feel that you should open yourself to me.”

“Well, I have decided to confide in no one, never. But seeing you again—if there’s one person on earth in whom I have full confidence, you—but no use, no use to say one word—the difficulty is simply insurmountable, because the injury is as irreparable as a bad fate, which it is.”

“You may be mistaken—there is hardly a trouble in this world which may not be averted or mitigated.

“Whatever this is, I am certain it is not your fault. And at any rate, I cannot even sympathize fully without at least some knowledge.”

The young man arose and began to walk the floor, very much in the manner of a strong animal that knows he is quite effectually caged.

The sensitive heart of the spectator suffered extremely then.

Presently Lanning—consumed by a mysterious thirst—took a deep drink of cold water. Then he went to a trunk, unlocked it, and took out a letter, which he gave to his friend.

“You must read for yourself—I cannot read it again. It’s a terrible, damnable letter!”

He went to the window again and looked out at nothing.

The communication was dated at New Orleans. It was in the chirography of an old person, and was affectionately addressed to

“MY DEAR ALVAREZ.”

The following paragraphs caught the Professor’s eye at once:

“My dear boy, I happen to know that the Probate Judge here is searching for the heir to about

fifteen thousand dollars. Now, the true heir is a Spanish-American young man, with just a strain of negro blood.

“I am certain that I am the only one living that knows that circumstance and can identify the person.

“Your grandfather Alvarez, who was exiled from Spain, came to this city. He soon married a very elegant woman, who, however, was a *mustiphini*. My own mother was called a *quin-teron*, therefore I was called ‘white.’ Your mother and I went in the American, Spanish, and French social circles here.

“This money came recently, of course, and from a relative of your grandmother.

“I am now an old man, Alvarez, and have seen considerable change in regard to race prejudice. Probably, you will live to see more. I cannot foresee the outcome, but I believe I can consistently advise you to accept the situation. The matter may remain a secret with you, myself, and the judge, who is my true friend. Please advise me soon as to your decision.”

Although the professor saw that so much of the long letter included the principal information, he read on, thinking that a good suggestion might follow. His friend had dropped his head upon his folded arms at the table.

“I am feeling very lonely these days. All my near relatives have passed away except my granddaughter, Pearl Couture, whom you remember as a pretty little girl. She is about to graduate from Berea College. Of course, I think she is adorable, and I suspect that you would think so too, on beholding her. She was away the last time you were here. We have seen so little of you since you were grown. I wish you would come and live here. Your father and mother, and some other friends, are much in my thoughts. My old wound has made me reminiscent lately—you know I led my regiment hard against the ‘Rock of Chickamauga.’ Though I sometimes suffer this or that kind of pain, I am now glad it was that sort of a rock. I do not blame myself much for fighting a few hard battles—it was natural.

The greatest and costliest and wickedest mistake was in standing out so long after Gettysburg.

“Alvarez, the main thing in life is to be able to appreciate the situation. We have to take a sickening pill now and then. In after years only we can see that Providence is a good doctor. I hope you will remember this. You will suffer some about this matter, I know, but I feel that I must notify you.

“Before I close let me say a little about your mother, whom you knew only as a mere boy can know. She was so good and tender-hearted. She was beautiful, too, and had the most wonderful voice—low and soft, but far-reaching. She never sang in a high key. You have her guitar, which is, or was, a superb instrument. As trustee, I also turned over to you a certain unique song. This is how we got the words of it : your father and I were coming away from New York on the cars. We bought a daily paper—I think it was the Sun—which contained the verses. The editor asked if anybody could tell who the author was, and he added : ‘Without regard to the dialect,

this is one of the most beautiful poems in the English language.'

"I hope, Alvarez, you will hunt it up and learn it, for I want you to sing it when you come. You mother composed the music, and arranged it for the guitar with the help of a music-teacher. I transcribed the copy of the score which you have.

"Often have I seen old Alvarez put that guitar into Emeline's hands and give her a peculiar nod. Then he would retire to a dark corner, and when the melody melted his heart, he would sob like a child. The absurd old slave-owner !

"Do write to me soon.

"Yours affectionately,

"R. A. HART."

"Lanning, what do you propose to do?"

"About what?"

"Well, that money, for one thing."

"That cursed money! That is not to be considered. As an honorable man, I must break—at least my heart will break. Look here, Skoop—

men!" He went to the trunk again and displayed a yard or two of black crape.

"What's that for?" The Professor wondered if this unbalanced man was preparing for one of those very thoughtful suicides.

"Why, I'm going to tack it to the wall, with that envelope. I need some black wool to put with them,—am sorry I can't obtain that which old nigger Ned lost—but I can get a farmer to bring me some sheep's wool, that is better!"

"Lanning!"

"Then I'll write to Miss Ségal breaking our engagement."

He put his head on his arms again, and sobbed.

The Professor waited a few minutes, and then said:

"Alvarez Lanning, it is too late in the nineteenth century to talk as you do."

"But you—are—very—glad that *you* are not tainted with negro blood!"

"It's not at all a question of preferences."

"Ah, there you are!"

"Yes, here I am,—and I'd rather a thousand

times over be a black plantation laborer" (and Professor Skoopmen thundered on the table with his fist) "than fail to do the right thing by humanity in general!"

Lanning opened his eyes and looked at his friend in intense amazement. He was completely dumfounded, and could not have saved his life by uttering a word.

"Now, I speak for myself. As for Miss Ségal, I don't know what she will do or say. Women—as they appear to me—partake largely of the nature of good conundrums. I don't know, I say. But I do know—much better than one of your years possibly can—that she is, in breadth and comprehensiveness of mind, one of the most marvelous of persons.

"Now, as I told you, my departure is near, and I have one request to make. Honestly, I cannot see how you, as a friend and a gentleman, can refuse it. I want to arrange a final meeting of the trio. Upon my word, it is not to lead you into any kind of a trap. The party can then disperse,—if it is a question of mere diver-

gence, nothing can be easier than to separate, never again to meet. If the facts justify that, I shall be willing.

“Meantime, you just pull yourself together and pitch into your work with enthusiasm in the morning—it will help you, in this or that way.

“I’ll send you a note to-morrow. Not a word—good-day, Lanning.”

XIV.

THE next morning Professor Skoopmen sent the following note to his unhappy friend :

“ MY DEAR LANNING :—

“ I have had a little conversation—more or less indefinite, of course—with Miss Ségal.

“ As she was anxious about your strange absence (remember it must have impressed her as being very strange), she was glad to learn that no great harm has befallen you thus far.

“ This evening you two are to join me in the parlor of my hotel. Owing to other duties which cannot be postponed, I shall be unable to escort her ; and the arrangement is for you to call at half-past seven and accompany her. I am sorry that this will be somewhat embarrassing to both—to you especially.

“ When I was a boy, I had a writing-book in

which there was a certain copy with the directions appended: 'Rule for shading: Do not shade.' It is needless to give you a rule for the conversation which you will not have on this walk,—your voice will be too husky for talking, and even the most phenomenal meteorological conditions would not be a safe basis for remarks.

"But when it comes to just plain walking, under difficulties, I know that you can be depended upon to do it like a man and a gentleman.

"J. S."

That evening Lanning called at the hotel and asked for Professor Skoopmen. He was directed to the parlor, where he found his friend alone. Evidently the young man was a little surprised and considerably disappointed, as he had hoped, and, indeed, half expected to find Miss Ségal there, for it was now past the appointed hour.

He explained to the Professor that he had called at her place, according to the arrangement, to escort her to the place of meeting. But he was

told that she had gone out early in the evening, leaving instructions to the effect that any one who might call was to be informed that she must be excused till a later hour.

The fact is, she had been called unexpectedly to another part of the city to attend to an urgent matter, having received an important telegram from Cincinnati.

Lanning was either misinformed as to the exact word which she had left for him, or the super-sensitiveness of his unhappy condition had misled him,—he naturally felt that she wished to avoid him.

It was truly a critical moment for Alvarez Lanning. He was on the point of leaving the place and the city forever (and even the idea of suicide occurred to him), but his great confidence in the Professor led him to reconsider the matter; the result was he decided to see his good friend once more. And this was the only friend who could now influence him.

The explanation of Miss Ségal's absence was quite puzzling to Professor Skoopmen, and he was

just beginning to appear seriously annoyed when the lady herself entered the parlor.

Although she came thus opportunely, it was obvious that she did not bring her usual splendid equanimity—plainly, the trouble was making a mark upon her which indicated much injury.

Her suffering, however, differed greatly from that of Lanning; his was a state which involved humiliation and despair, while she—with a mind much more liberal and far-seeing—was troubled chiefly on his account. She feared for his sanity and his life.

At a glance she perceived and realized his condition, physical, mental and moral—she knew it was terrible. No wonder, then, that she showed painful agitation.

But while she was as sensitive as a flower, she was as strong as a weeping-willow, and could as gracefully conform herself to the hard blast.

So, she appeared there with presence so noble and lovely that both gentlemen instantly arose and bowed in a way which clearly manifested the most profound admiration and regard.

The younger man was silent, of course; but his friend spoke at once, and in phraseology both elegant and spirited expressed great pleasure in seeing Miss Ségal.

To her, his words, his manner, and his general appearance were reviving indeed. She had never seen him looking so well and imposing—he was even attractive. He was carefully and appropriately dressed, his hair was arranged effectively, and his glasses were correctly adjusted. The wide expanse of face and forehead—turned, as usual, frankly toward the spectator—was remarkably luminous, something like electrical discharges of intelligence played over the kindly physiognomy.

In short, Professor Skoopmen was so impressive on this infelicitous evening that Yetta Ségal intuitively felt he was in full harmony with the deep, mysterious undercurrent of life.

She remembered to have read, somewhere, of Napoleon that on occasions which would have been quite dreadful to any but a genius or a god, he was sometimes heard to mutter to himself:

"We are in accord!" The air of the Professor seemed to denote a like masterful accord with prevailing elements and forces.

Although what he said to this young couple was really much like a lecture, and though he well knew that he should be obliged to speak at length before either would volunteer a remark or ask a question, his style was the conversational, and was soothing without being soporific.

The strange party retired to a cosy corner of the parlor, where the light was very properly a little subdued, and took seats. Professor Skoopmen did not venture any remarks about the weather or the health of those present—he thoroughly knew his audience, and proceeded as directly as possible to the point.

XV.

“ My friends, I am glad to believe that your sorrowful anxiety, your distressed humiliation, and your pitiable conclusion do not make a case that is truly alarming.

“ Your trouble is but a small part of the world of unhappiness which is involved in a problem that we are persistently urged to solve. This problem seems merely curious to those who imagine that they are only spectators, but in fact it is of infinite importance to all.

“ In the realm of psychology, solutions have been identified with much trouble and distress. The soul grows with effort that is often painful.

“ Concerning this particular matter, it is now many years since the situation suggested to my mind a theory. During these years I have not been idle, and the theory (which probably some others hold) is now—well, I call it my sublime belief.

“You should now consider it. But I perceive that you are not equipped to consider it, adequately, alone. It is fortunate that you have fine intelligence, since you may be happily serene by being truly thoughtful.

“You must be impressed by the fact that there are a great many people, here and there, of mixed blood, and that the number is increasing. It is fortunate, therefore, that very many of these are especially interesting; it is well that not a few are indeed truly admirable specimens of the human race.

“Such phenomena must be interpreted in a way consistent with man’s nature: if he is developmental; if he shall attain higher status through struggle, or through means that are seemingly, or for the time, degrading; if he is moving from the simple to the complex, as to organization; if universal movement tends to unific existence,—then race interchange, with elimination of peculiar characteristics, has probably made its appearance as a phase of infinite order, and for the benefit of future man.

“The first intermixtures of which we have reliable data were mostly the result of conditions which may be called accidental: the woman accounted plunder of war; the slave owned by a master who ignorantly theorizes and wickedly assumes that she is only an animal, but who nevertheless demonstrates that she can bear human children,—in short, these so-called accidental conditions comprise the various forms of rape which belong to the primitive movement.

“Then there is the instance in which degradation is not so easily determined and ascribed: the union which appears to be the result of psychologic affinity, but which is interdicted by law and custom, and pursued by death or ostracism.

“Then there is the common instance in which the so-called accidental condition does not involve legal opposition, and which is more or less agreeable to society in general: the marriage of the individual who is separated by the ordinary circumstance of life from racial associates. Such instances show mating to be more important than perpetuation of distinct race!

“ But all pioneer movements do not have such accidental conditions—it is significant that marriages sometimes occur between persons of two distinct types who are cultured, able, and perfectly free to choose.

“ As this is a phase which is more characteristic of the present than of any past time, the fact puts the whole question in an entirely different aspect.

“ Indeed, the most immediately promising phase of race-mingling is found among advanced people, for it is the more civilized who spread themselves over the earth, and who have the greater influence. Wealth and distinction may overcome prejudice.

“ The children of such voluntary union are at home either in the Orient or the Occident; and they are comparatively more exempt from disadvantage.

“ Thus, while instances of race-crossing are increasing, obstacles to universal fusion are decreasing, since new men and women appear who are better adapted and qualified for further intermixture.

“Is it not significant that there are races which have not been classified with any one of the three great types? Authorities disagree as to whether certain groups belong to the white or to the black type. If ever there was certainty as to definition, it has been obliterated by blending ; or, perhaps, a natural development entirely outside of the two types has supplied a medium between them.

“For while it may be true that there has been divergence, more or less important, from this or that primitive stock, extraordinary interest is now (or soon will be) centered in the phenomenon of convergence.”

The speaker became silent at this point, apparently lost in profound contemplation of the purely scientific aspect of the subject.

Neither of the gentlemen noticed that Miss Ségal's face had broadened into a decided smile. This change was owing to the fact that she just then wondered (as she afterwards told the Professor) what would be the effect on the typical

debating-society on learning that a practical philosopher, in a disquisition on races, had omitted the mention of "Adam," and had not even "guessed at" the tribal identity of "Cain's wife."

Professor Skoopmen was soon brought back, however, by a question from Mr. Lanning, who, it appeared, did not hurry out at this break in the lecture to "see a man." The Professor was the one he wished to see—the most interesting man on earth, and the only one who could quench the intolerable thirst of Alvarez Lanning.

"Pardon me, Professor Skoopmen—let me ask you, what does Science say on this subject?"

"Oh, as to that, I have so little data that I feel rather lonesome. There is a remarkable paucity of statement and expression in the essays and text-books which I have seen, and in the great cyclopædias, which are the product of wonderful research. I have nowhere found the subject of amalgamation treated comprehensively, in its relation to human destiny. No one, I believe, has even asked pertinent questions about this which is of transcendent interest.

“Incidentally there is some mention of the effect of crossings. Some historians have said that certain people of mixed races were versatile and of well-balanced character. Spencer says : ‘It is a fact, that the crossing of varieties results in unusual fertility and vigor.’

“Just as the vigor of the plant manifested itself in the flower and fruit, so our physical vigor, with careful culture, is crowned with mental strength and psychic beauty.

“The ultimate attitude of Science, my friend, must be scientific—it must be characterized by reason, and therefore by universal fairness. At any rate, there is no blood upon the hands of Science ; and in this it differs cheerfully from Politics and Religion,—but these,” added the Professor, smiling peculiarly, “are very serious matters, to be sure.

“I naturally imagine that biologic and psychologic investigators in general will perceive the movement to be evolutionary, if they do not already. They will study its compensative aspect.

“According to the mysterious but every day law of compensation, in race interchange, the superior must receive something of value from the inferior. Now, that which is valuable to a system of all-around or symmetrical development is really a necessity.

“The absence of, or the deterioration in, certain qualities essential to the higher race calls for assistance ; in some instances this may have to come from extraneous and perhaps inferior sources.

“It is plainly true that some types of humanity are less advanced than others, because they are more primitive—evolution from lower life was either begun later or has been retarded.

“In other instances of comparison, however, the difference as to general status appears to be one of opinion merely. The Japanese, for example, are regarded by some able judges as the finest type of developmental civilization.

“For this is an age which is characterized by some fairness, and at least some admirable qualities are discovered and acknowledged in those

racés whose general condition is obviously inferior.

“It is presumptuous for the wisest to assert that the man of lower type has no element of strength peculiar to his race which the most advanced does not need in his general organization. It may be needed either for present protection in the way of reinforcement, or as an element of strength for further advancement.

“While the advanced type is evidently superior in most respects to the inferior, it may be weak—it may have deteriorated—in some one quality. For example, the Anglo-Saxon was transplanted to this country, which is more or less malarious, and at about the same time the African came from a climate still more noxious. The latter is able, therefore, to impart an element of resisting strength to the former in conferring an immunity against malarial diseases. On the other hand, the white man comes—after a thousand years of development—with power to aid the black man in resisting the pulmonary dangers

of the new environment. This is an illustration of the beautiful natural law of compensation—of reciprocal benefits.

“It is an instance, however, relating to physical conditions ; but there are exchanges involving the psychological just as surely.

“In some instances, at least, the lower type imparts strength of a more refined quality than it receives—the instance may be one of a more acute sense, or even of intellectual acumen, or of more perfect equanimity.

“(To those who may believe that the various types sprang from a ‘first man,’—in agreement with the Biblical declaration that ‘the Lord made of one blood all nations of men,’—and who still may hold that the general theory of convergence is true, it is suggested that the good of temporary divergence probably lies in the fact that types operating singly, and in different environments, have had better opportunity for developing this or that quality necessary to the cosmopolite of the future.)

“While the term ‘racial characteristics’ often

implies some undesirable and even objectionable quality, it nevertheless includes some that are desirable.

“While it may not seem advisable to give in exchange brain for muscular power, or ethical force for admirable nervous organization, yet ultimately it may prove to be a wise course.

“In brief, many exchanges are but seemingly deteriorating or degrading, or are really so but temporarily, owing to the changeable nature of situation and relation. On the other hand, the great law of compensation doubtless contains both explanation and reconciliation.

“Man has been helped forward—always, and in most if not all places—by a movement in general nature which is more radical and more universally promising than any which springs from the political, social, or religious systems of the world. These are not necessarily regulative, sometimes they have to be modified, or even overthrown, because of their crudity and injustice;—but the natural, spontaneous movement referred to is perpetual and regulative—it is

always and everywhere encouraging and even pushing the growth of reason.

“But I beg pardon for imposing upon you to this extent—doubtless you are both much fatigued by this time, and—”

“Oh no,” protested Yetta Ségal.

“No, no,” declared Alvarez Lanning, although he was nearly worn out, and consequently about subdued.

“Well, *I* am,” said Professor Skoopmen,—“I never sat in just this kind of a chair—I need rest. It is not proper for me to resign now and give the conclusion of this matter to the journals of civilization, since more or less of it is of a personal nature.

“So you—ah, I see, you will come back again.”

On the plea that he needed fresh air and a little exercise, he — with Mr. Lanning — accompanied Miss Ségal to her place of residence.

XVI.

MR. LANNING, unassisted, conducted the young lady to the place of meeting the following evening.

Again the Professor was ready to proceed.

“In considering this theory, we naturally look about for practical evidences of its truth. We have already seen that there may be mutual advantage in the intermingling of two distinct races ; I am fortunate in being able (after wide research) to adduce an instance which embodies the three of which all others are said to be varieties.

“In our neighboring islands—the Antilles—is a wonderful example of race mixture, the result of a combination of the three chief races : white, black, and yellow,—the European, the African and the Carib Indian are the elements of a type which is bright, beautiful, and strong.

“The blending which unites two races is far more extensive than may appear to the casual observer. It has so long been in operation in various parts of the world, sporadically, that positive assurance is now impossible as to the racial purity of any individual; while there are general instances which involve numerous people simultaneously,—there has been considerable amalgamation between Europeans and the Indians of the Western Hemisphere—in Mexico and South America, and in this country. Also, the black type has crossed to some extent with the red, while its fusion with the white is by this time so considerable as to be clearly significant.

“Instances have become comparatively common of the intermarriage of those of the Jewish and other types. The world over, religion has been closely identified with race, and that of the Jews has been very exclusive; but, on the other hand, this people is not numerically important, and it is already involved in the general movement.

“Apparently it is for the Occidental to demon-

strate most strikingly that it is better for man, in a general way, to become a homogeneous being.

“This country of ours is especially interesting because various enterprising peoples meet and mingle here.

“The United States will have a population of several hundred million in the near future. Then, the progressive, cosmopolitan character will be maintained the more surely, in the racial interchange with the multitudinous Orient.

“As a rule, the changes which affect race tend in the direction of cosmopolitanism and preparation for unity. The fact is important that the tribes or distinct divisions which have not been influenced by the homogeneous movement—or which may be incapable of receiving such influence—are disappearing, or have already disappeared, in some instances without apparent cause.

“Doubtless it is well,—this planet is not a good place for that people which is too poor or too close to contribute a gem to this crown of destiny.

“But type is changed by new thought, as well

as by new lineage. It is apparent that persons who are not strict in the typical beliefs, desires, and habits of their people become less racial in body as well as mind.

“In some instances even the Jewish physiognomy has been modified by thought and aspiration which may be called non-tribal.

“Pardon me, Miss Ségal, and allow me to say that you are an example of this law. Perhaps your lineage is strictly Jewish,—no matter, your face declares that the great Jehovah has not been powerful enough to enforce conformity. You have escaped, soul and body—I congratulate you.”

Professor Skoopmen ceased speaking, arose, and bowed (more or less awkwardly) to Yetta Ségal. He then put his hands deeply into his trousers pockets and began to walk the floor, with spectacles maladjusted.

The young people exchanged glances and smiled—which they could well afford to do.

Mr. Lanning was not disposed to direct the ceremonies; but the young lady—seeing that

this part of the program might be well-nigh interminable—endeavored to recall their friend. Finally, she spoke :

“ Professor ! ”

But he continued oblivious, and Miss Ségal went to the piano, and immediately the air was alive with a harmony that presently superseded, if it did not surpass, the Professor’s dream.

Just as the gentlemen joined Miss Ségal—at the close of her beautiful and splendidly suggestive improvisation—Professor Skoopmen was saying to Lanning, in reference to Miss Ségal :

“ Her beautifier is not in a box—her good sense came from no book—she is in advance of my wordy philosophy, and makes us happy by her reasonable eclecticism.”

The indescribable interest which the couple could not hide showed that something more was anticipated.

“ Go on, Professor—do,” urged the young man.

“ Prejudice finds many explanations that are

taken for conclusive reasons or sacred injunctions. But, in time, irresistible growth pushes them aside as so much cinder from an exhausted blaze.

“The soul sometimes develops unconsciously in this or that quality. In such instances, the discovery is especially interesting.

“Let me relate an anecdote. One day I met a friend on the street in New York. He put his arm through mine and conducted me to his residence, which is a fine one, for he has ample means. He is an Art collector of the happy kind,—that is, he expends much thought as well as money.

“‘Here, Skoopmen—this way—do not intrude there—*that* is our dining-room!’ (The fact is, a plate is always laid for me there, and also at several tables in this country,—I suspect that my presence is solicited because I amuse the folks in some way or other.)

“‘Here—give me your opinion of this new work.’ It was a superb statuette, in bronze, about three feet high, on a tall pedestal of airy design. The subject was the lightly-poised

figure of a young woman, with arms above the head, and with a face of matutinal expression—a composition typical of Morning. The work is one of indubitable artistic value, and my friend was glad to be corroborated in his estimate of it.

“ ‘Bryson,’ I asked, ‘do you notice any peculiarity about this material?’

“ ‘No—of course, it is bronze—white marble might have been more appropriate ; but there are fine Venuses in bronze, and I have seen a beautiful one in black marble,—but—such colors do seem strange, now that I think of it, eh, Skoopmen?’

“ ‘No—not more strange than unbiased Art or comprehensive thought. I referred to the particular color of this material,—it is interesting to me that this differs felicitously from ordinary bronze, being more golden and fruit-like in tone. It also appears more satiny in texture. I have noticed a similar effect in the skin of those of mixed races.’

“Bryson started a little, and muttered,

‘Pshaw!’ But I continued, enveloping his dose in honey :

“ ‘Esthetically, I can imagine nothing outside of harmonious Art, or of some transcendent dream, that is more *recherché* than the persons of certain people in whom are blended the white, black, and red types,—their elegant, sculptural figures—which embody perfect muscles ; fine profiles ; splendid eyes, in which a sweet melancholy is discoverable ; curly hair, richly dark, and gleaming with bluish lights, to complement the tone of skin—a rare golden, fruity color, with an echo of pink coming through.’

“ My friend made no comment—not in words. He gave a long, low whistle.

“ ‘Good-bye, Skoopmen—please don’t come to dinner for a week or two. I—I want time to think. I fear I shall not like my Morning so well now.’

“ ‘At your best, Bryson, you are not such a fool.’

“ If evolution were not true, the shape of the

nose, complexion, dialect, sectarianism, etc., would be of great and lasting importance.

“We are slow to realize that psychologic capacity is the supreme consideration.

“The outlook, however, has never been so favorable. The commercial and political relations of advanced peoples point to the unific in custom, language, feeling, and expression.

“Look forward, imagine for the various leading peoples the same commercial interests; the same ethical motives; the same school-books, and social pleasures; the same aspiration for higher condition,—in brief, consider the universal working of common laws of development, and then you can see, by prescience, the logical result.”

“But, Professor Skoopmen,” said the young man, “will not such union as you probably do foresee result in sameness and monotony as to the general action and appearance of people?”

“No—on the contrary the outlook is better for individuality; it will be at once stronger and more refined, and new types must come of ceaseless development.

“The individual always has the infinite mystery of existence to encourage him.

“But in the very truth of such mystery lies danger for the individual.

“The mingling of races intensifies social complexity ; and society is governed mostly by conservatism, right or wrong (for it embodies certain remnants of barbarism). The existing conditions of life make it a very serious matter for those who go beyond conventional limits. That limits are finally extended does not preclude the fact that pioneer experiences naturally include hardship, danger, and fatality.

“Personal safety and comfort, and the ready material for more symmetrical growth—with its more refined pleasures—are for those who follow in the pioneered road.

“Movements ultimately helpful to humanity in general often ruin the individual.

“Do not for a moment suppose that some higher power—‘Providence,’ for instance—is sure to protect the conscientious.

“ Here is a life-picture in which the gleam of providential care is more remote than the dog-star : A mother and her little children—moved and reassured by the New Testament promise that the faithful, fervent supplication shall be granted—pray, on retiring, for safety during the night. Out of that night's darkness springs a cyclonic monster which devours them with a cruelty that is all but infinite.

“ Now, while this phase of the weather may help the population generally, individual welfare is relentlessly obliterated. So, personal assurances of that order are seen to be delusive and wrong.

“ Increased intelligence is the best protection. And it has apprised man of the fact that bitter doses necessary to general health must be swallowed, even when they come in a way popularly supposed to be degrading.

“ I think you perceive that it is not my desire to accelerate this movement, except in so far as humanitarian conditions and requirements indicate.

“ However, I am bound to declare that all people will not have just consideration till this unific belief is widely extended.

“ Those who are directly involved in what is apparently a natural and inevitable evolution should be exempt from hateful and unjust treatment.

“ As evasion of responsibility is detrimental and culpable with regard to the individual, so it is also as to the nation, or the society of people.

“ My admiration is unbounded for a truth which Herbert Spencer has expressed concerning the status of the individual, since I know of no human utterance—not excepting the best in the so-called sacred books—which is quite so sublime :

“ ‘ No one can be perfectly free till all are free. No one can be perfectly moral till all are moral. No one can be perfectly happy till all are happy.’

“ Nations, as well as individuals, must advance to perfection on the conditions of universality.

“ I am glad that such an utterance comes from

one who belongs to a nation that has often held an oppressive attitude toward weaker people.

“It is a good set-off against a reputed remark of an English statesman during the crisis in our late civil war, in which the question of slavery was most seriously involved: ‘A new nation has been born.’ A ‘grand old man’ of still loftier endeavor would have said: ‘It will be unfortunate for humanity if a new nation has been born.’

“But notwithstanding the shortcomings of individuals and nations, there is to-day a preponderance of truths on the side of optimism. Melioration, which is within our province, brings increased happiness for all.

“The destiny of man on this planet is not a something to be realized in a day; and—depend upon it—the race will remain right here till it is mature and ready for some further mysterious transformation.

“Pardon me, my young friends,—I had almost forgotten that you are especially concerned

with this subject of race-blending." (The couple appeared embarrassed.) You have felt an impulse to rush into unhappy self-sacrifice. Abnormal sentimentality may be corrected by reason; therefore it is your duty to consider the whole matter in a way which will enable you to adjust a safe and proper balance between altruism and egoism.

"You will not find the duty a gloomy one—the outlook for you is perfectly clear.

"On the happy way to your individual destiny, you can well afford to be deprived of the society of those who would degrade you by ostracism. They may injure you, but cannot degrade you,—real degradation is involved in injustice to humanity."

XVII.

ON learning that the Professor was on the eve of saying farewell to Chattanooga, Mrs. Frank at once arranged for a testimonial, at her beautiful home, where those who had learned to appreciate that gentleman might meet him once more.

Her plans were realized most happily—the whole affair was conducted with that rare tact which never makes itself noticeable. The event was important as well as charming, since a number of the city's most admirable people were in attendance. (A few of the choicer numbers of the Four Hundred were there,—enough to add an octave to this or that end of the social keyboard.)

The occasion had great delight for the cosmopolitan taste, for the comprehensive mind, and for the fortunate possessor of symmetrical feeling,—the *ensemble*, as varied in color and quiet

passion as the opal, afforded the wealth of existence. Faces, forms, textures, lights, colors, perfumes, and tones lavishly contributed to an effect analogous to that which an artist-seer calls the "play of surface," and which, truly, is no less than the other side of the circle of heart-thrill. In brief, at that testimonial party there was full and perfect employment of stored sunshine and accumulated soul.

The several members of a small group of ladies noticed that Professor Skoopmen was for the moment alone and a little apart from the animated throng, in which he had already spent a lively and enjoyable half hour,—they perceived that he was possessed by the spirit of abstraction. In this instance, however, he was more smiling than he appeared in most of his "spells." As those observers were matrons—all except Miss Ségal—and were well acquainted with him, they, after a hurried consultation, decided to approach and surprise him with the offer of a penny for his thoughts; and this movement was to be prelim-

inary to his arraignment as the culpable bachelor who is caught in the act of deserting the good city and its eligible women.

The captivating party dashed upon him at once, and the quiet man was obliged to arouse and rally to his own defense.

“My friends, your criticism is apropos, and I also appreciate the reasonableness of your curiosity—of course, it is sweet reasonableness. In our preëminent land, this city is second to none as to the number and loveliness of its lovable women. But—I—well, let me say in extenuation that circumstances over which I have *lost* control—”

“Ah, ha! ha! Now, Professor, do tell us the story!”

“And describe her, if you can, ha, ha!”

“A few minutes since, my thoughts were diverted by a suggestion here,—perhaps it was that blossoming dwarf-cherry-tree; or that Oriental vase; or the dream may have been inspirited by the presence of that exquisite nut-brown young lady over there whose appearance

is not entirely Occidental. At any rate, something peculiarly felicitous here reminded me of a lovely—front yard, I was about to say, but may I be confused perpetually if the place isn't a blooming back-yard in Japan—well, no matter, the situation very properly corresponds to my sentiment, which also has more than one fine side.

“You probably noticed recently that the papers reported that the distinguished author of the ‘Light of Asia’ intended to marry a lady of Japan. It was a case of mistaken identity. I was talking with that gentleman and a mutual friend in Yokohama, when the latter, in jocular manner, said to the former: ‘Before you finish the Light of the World, you would better engage Professor Skoopmen as a collaborator—some of his interpretations would certainly be of world-wide interest!’ The mistake was made by an ‘efficient’ newspaper reporter, who overheard the conversation, and who had heard of a certain engagement in that land of ‘Kokoro.’”

The announcement caused more or less sur-

prise and emotion among the ladies, some of whom exhibited the very embarrassment which the expectant Professor was ready to analyze. But in a moment all had congratulated him with the enthusiasm that comes of full confidence.

Of course some one declared she was just dying to know all about the bride-elect, and Professor Skoopmen was not the one to see his fellow-beings "go to the wall" for lack of information.

"My lady is a widow, without children, which is providential, as I am not yet ready to have the Orient call me 'daddy'; and should I conclude to reside in the East, I prefer not to have a member of my household advising me to go West.

"The amount of worldly goods which madame possesses enables her to be very heavenly. She is fond of Art,—by the way, it was her late partner who produced a famous peach-blow vase. He got fifteen dollars for it, and when it brought fifteen thousand in America, he just departed for a shore where there are no such blows.

"In conclusion, let me assure you that she is

very accomplished—really understands perspective, and promises (not very solemnly) to understand *me*.

“Now, ladies, I hope your interest in the case will not abate when you learn that one of her grandparents was a European.

“You will meet her before many months have passed, and the whole affair will then be easy to comprehend, for our party will include my mother-in-law.”

“Then, Professor, the declaration must be true that the Japanese mother is more perfectly a mother than is to be found in any other land. But is there a particular reason why they make desirable mothers-in-law?”

“Well, they are physically small, and their will-power is manifested in the gentlest way.”

Presently Alvarez Lanning was requested to sing a Spanish love-song. Mrs. Frank—who had often had the care of the instrument—placed in his hands the precious old guitar that his mother had touched so divinely. As he tuned and ca-

essed the chords, the sensitive young man was affected almost to tears.

But immediately the romantic hearers were delighted by a very fine Andalusian love-appeal.

After it was concluded, some humorous fellow handed Lanning a banjo, and suggested a rattling echo from the plantation. He complied, laughing, and picked a most lively dance-jingle. It pleased several who had not appreciated the love-song; but Alvarez Lanning had not yet pleased himself; so he again took up the sacred guitar. All present gave close attention, for all felt the fascination of which the young man himself was unconscious.

In a beautiful, sympathetic voice—low-toned, as Emeline's had been—and with wonderful dialectic talent, Lanning sang the piece of unknown authorship that often had made old Alvarez cry, and which was mentioned in the unhappy letter :

SONG.

De massa ob de sheepfol'
Dat guard de sheepfol' bin,

Look out in de gloomerin' meadows
Whar de long night rain begin—
So he call to de hirelin' shepa'd,
Is my sheep, is dey all come in ?

Oh, den says de hirelin' shepa'd,
Des's some, dey's black and thin,
And some, dey's po' ol' weddas,
But de res' dey's all brung in,
But de res' dey's all brung in.

Den de massa ob de sheepfol'
Dat guard de sheepfol' bin,
Goes down in de gloomerin' meadows,
Whar de long night rain begin—
So he le' down de ba's ob de sheepfol',
Callin' sof', Come in, come in,
Callin' sof', Come in, come in !

Den up t'ro' de gloomerin' meadows,
T'ro' de col' night rain an win',
And up t'ro' de gloomerin' rain-paf,
Whar de sleet fa' pie'cin' thin,
De po' los' sheep ob de sheepfol'
Dey all comes gadderin' in,
De po' los' sheep ob de sheepfol'
Dey all comes gadderin' in,

While the song deeply impressed all who heard it—for many eyes filled, some to overflowing, and a few of the more emotional souls sobbed—there were, beside the singer, only two present to whom the motif was profoundly deep and doubly dear ; but instead of weeping, they smiled.

One said to the other, aside, in a low sweet voice :

“I cannot tell you, Professor, how proud I am of him.”

“It is unnecessary to say a word, my dear girl—I know very well.”

XVIII.

As they came away from the party, our two young friends were silent. This was not at all strange, under the circumstances ; for they had just left a scene of unusual social animation, and, of course, in its turn the outside tranquillity was found to be refreshing. It is true, also, that they had not enjoyed the various indoor charms quite freely and fully. One of them, at least, was still distressed over his recent discovery. Every conscience-cloud, every pride-fog had not vanished at the appearance of the Professor's luminous philosophy.

In a word, both experienced an uneasiness or depression which was somewhat vague yet unmistakable in its effect,—that which Miss Ségal felt was none the less taxing for being reflected from her companion.

This young woman of wonderfully fine harmony clearly perceived that she herself must complete the adjustment of the chords of that jangling soul—she knew that true harmony could not be attained in any other way. But she was fully aware that the supreme moment for effort had not yet arrived, and that she could not safely say or do anything to precipitate it.

There was, fortunately, another reason why they proceeded very silently on their way ; they had come at once and completely into a presence that was so sublimely beautiful as to be hush-inspiring.

Out-of-doors, this observing, impressionable couple was absolutely compelled to contemplate the phenomenon commonly called night.

The quiet city and the reposeful country were covered with a sea of exquisite light, which overflowed from the moon's full circle. The various forms and masses had the mystic appearance which is an element of the enchanting. Even casual spectators were moved to exclaim : "What a fine night !" Yet it is probable that the many

had but passing interest, and responded in a common, superficial way.

But in the psychic existence of these two it was an hour of infinite importance. So they proceeded silently and slowly, sometimes involuntarily pausing. They were so profoundly impressed by what they saw and felt as to be quite oblivious to all ordinary affairs and appearances.

An hour or so passed, for the couple strolled into the suburbs, and beyond. Finally Miss Ségal directed the movement to a certain slope in the country which afforded full view of a general scene that was simply matchless in its way.

But Lanning—this healthy, fortunate young man, whose Spanish progenitors had danced the fandango and serenaded available hearts most happily by the light of this same moon; whose American ancestors had successfully “run for office” (both night and day), in blissful ignorance as to their unfitness for incumbency; whose sable forefathers had felicitously discussed the perfect watermelon,—this live and promising young man (with a jewel of a Jewess on his arm at that very

moment), seemed for the time to be incapacitated for decided pleasure.

Presently he said, with a half sigh, and a deprecatory glance at the milky way :

“ But it is true, O friend, that this impressive serenity includes the conditions for turbulence of spirit—it is a fact that a dangerous melancholy pervades this strange if not seductive beauty,—it is really apparent, and it will not down. The awful mystery !—you too must feel it, since it is here in us as well as up there. And is it not this mystery which actually encourages sad reflections, perhaps disgusting considerations ? ”

At this moment the noisome exhalation from an *abattoir* in that vicinity impressed Lanning with the incongruity of the sublime scene. He felt the inconsistency to be typical of his own situation, and even called her attention to it.

“ At any rate,” he continued, “ I am reminded that more than one poor dark ancestor of mine appealed in vain to the universal presence for comfort and material help. I, also, feel a degradation, which—”

He hesitated, and finally shook his speechless head.

“Go on,” said Miss Yetta, with eyes open to the glorious night-sky, and with a smile of infinite love.

She had noted with a peculiar pleasure that he was giving a valuable and instructive exhibition of paroxysmal materialism and pessimism,—it enabled her to gather strength for his rescue.

“Go on, Mr. Lanning—let the toboggan slide to the very bottom !”

This remark almost stopped him. But the momentum was too great, and he did go on.

“Ah, my friend, I see that you cannot reach the level of my feeling. But perhaps I can talk you down to a sort of cognizance of it.

“A few weeks ago I was contented, and even congratulated myself on my condition,—I did not suspect that I had inferior material in my composition, from which the most serious mental and moral trouble could spring. I believed that, even if I could not advance, my prospects,

at least, would still be bright. But, alas! the light of discovery came and cast a shadow as wide as the world.

“As for Professor Skoopmen’s philosophy,—well, it did help me considerably; and perhaps my soul would not have rebelled if the consolation had been given to another rather than to myself.

“But to *myself*—oh, myself!”

For the moment, Alvarez Lanning was incapable of further utterance. Only the most imaginative and sympathetic nature can understand such distress.

Miss Ségal waited a few moments, foreseeing the climax of his unhappiness.

“There is only a spark of pride left in me; but that, my good friend, will not permit your unbounded generosity.”

“Mr. Lanning, you are not a subject for reproach, on the one hand, nor for pity on the other—except as regards your great distress; but be assured that the conditions are *very wrong*, which make it possible for us to be thrown back-

ward and overwhelmed by any fact or consideration concerning our ancestry.

“I am not troubled, much less humiliated, because of the belief that my people—the Jews—could not, just a few thousand years ago, have been correctly classified as belonging to the Caucasian type. Their origin is uncertain—it may have been Egyptian, as some claim,—no matter, it is enough for me to know that they developed on certain lines. Therefore, I should not be held responsible for any real or supposed imperfections of my ancestors.”

“Yes,” replied Mr. Lanning, “it would be unreasonable to attach any stigma to you. But it may be another matter as to social equality.”

“My people,” she continued, “and certain other peoples—or representative individuals—have attained a growth which encourages general social intercourse. No prejudice can now effectually obstruct it.

“Some zealous persons, hoping to realize a dream of emotional prophecy, are trying to concentrate all the Jews in Palestine. This will

never be accomplished, because the more intelligent people desire nothing of the kind."

"Perhaps the idea of such return was not to be taken in its literal sense," he observed.

"Of course not ; the isolation of any type of humanity, at a time when its best members show fitness for general association, would be retrogression. In this age, when *universal usefulness is especially valued*, no such retrogressive movement can take place.

"To-day, more fully than was possible in the past, the representative member of this or that race, the progressive inhabitant of this or that country, is a citizen of the wide world.

"I hope you perceive how inevitable destiny is. Concentrated, my people would cease to be Jews, in any event ; for to some extent they have been molded by other peoples, and have been made both better and worse by their varied surroundings.

"Even if they really are 'the chosen people,' they will be more acceptable to high heaven if they can help the mass of humanity upward.

“In many instances the shortcomings and wrongdoings of the individual may be attributed to his race. The amount of harm involved is simply incalculable.”

“It is well that distinctive types have about run their natural course. As they go out, real brotherhood will come in.”

“That certainly is a noble view, nobly expressed.”

“To people in general,” proceeded Miss Ségal, “a person of characteristic type is more or less of a curiosity,—certain qualities are grotesque or disagreeable, and even the monstrous is suggested to some child-like minds.

“The conditions are bad indeed which enable us to find amusement by placing our fellow-being in the museum.”

The young man smiled, and shook his head in silent protest.

“Plainly, the soul demands a more perfect human adjustment. In fact, intelligence has long been dissatisfied. Years ago, a woman of wonderful perception declared: ‘Our idea of beauty

is never formed on the characteristics of a single race !' Evidently, she saw at least a part of that mysterious truth which our dear Professor views in its entirety.

"You see, my friend, I can preserve my equanimity through all this racial ferment, because I am an earnest believer in Evolution."

"I perceive, Miss Ségal, that you are somewhat heterodox."

"I do wish that you (and many others besides) would try to understand the immeasurable importance of this truth. The misfortune relative thereto is, that you think of it as a mere theory, or as a vague truth, belonging to a very remote period, when the quadruped was being metamorphosed into a biped—more or less comically and disgracefully !

"Professor Skoopmen is entirely correct in saying that the phenomenon of race-blending is one of the many evolutionary movements that are now under way. He is right, too, in declaring that it is high time for the great encyclopedias to record a definite conclusion concerning this

extensive and increasing movement,—whether it is abnormal and morbid, or normal and inevitable.

“By the way, such pioneer thinkers as Darwin have shown the origin of Man; our peculiar friend notes his destiny as to race-union; and surely others will appear, from time to time, to interpret correctly the successive and glorious changes of the earth-god.”

The couple now began the return; but there was more loitering, and occasionally a pause of a few moments,—the artist was enjoying the fine effects, and was ready to find a precious *motif*. Mr. Lanning was passive and silent; but he looked with considerable faith (and perhaps some credulity) in the direction indicated by his trusty guide. The latter appeared to have full confidence in her ability to lead in the right direction.

Presently Miss Ségal stopped and called attention to a small but lively stream which made that part of the landscape very attractive. Her companion mistakenly supposed that she was considering it as so much material for Art.

"Mr. Lanning, do you know how far away and just where that stream has its source?"

"No—I suppose it rises some distance back in the upland."

"Then you don't know just what kind of a spring it is?"

"Of course not." He thought she might wish to find it for the purpose of "taking" it.

"Just over there," continued the sweet voice, "it comes through a dense thicket—how dark and gloomy!"

"Yes, what a lonely, sad place—so mysterious! Miss Ségal, I hope that you will not go to such places unattended."

"No! I'll promise to avoid the ugly, dangerous places if *you* will! Gloomy place, truly; but the dear stream comes through it safely,—indeed, it comes out in fine style, and plays with the moon in a very brilliant and ravishing way. Those grassy, dewy slopes—what exquisite lines! See! there are some lovely animals grazing."

Lanning looked over that way very intently.

By this time something in the atmosphere, or elsewhere, caused him to imagine that the animals were eating poetically.

“The stream, Mr. Lanning! the stream! It is going on a long, winding journey, and without a map—but listen! Isn’t that a most charming song?”

“Yes.” Yet Lanning sighed a little.

“It is all very mysterious,” remarked his sympathetic companion, rather gravely.

“Oh, yes! and there’s that same melancholy something.”

“But the mysterious sadness of it all did not prevent the amateur poetess calling such a stream a ‘giggling brook’; nor did some useful man—probably well paid by the newspapers—hesitate to declare that he ‘loved to see the limpid brook limping down from the mountain.’”

“No, and if I were in the humor, I could laugh at that.”

“It is not irresistibly funny, I think, but it is somewhat cheerful. Mr. Lanning, a half hour since, you spoke with great feeling and much

truth about mystery, which the heavens accentuate at night. It is true that our hearts are sometimes wrung by it, in conjunction with sad recollections.

“But this omnipresent mystery, which oppresses you, I use to reassure myself.

“It is also true that the *insistence* of it all is awful—awesome, rather; but, for me, it is normal, happy development which is being insisted upon; and so I am not intimidated,—nor am I willing that noble people shall be imposed upon by the unprogressive ghosts which hide in this mystery.

“It is very strange, I must say,—in the face of this infinite insistence upon the lofty and the sublime, it is strange that even a pessimist must yield to any disagreeable features or conditions which mystery permits for the time.”

Mr. Lanning was silent. He felt that this was not so pleasant as the silvery stream and the grazing animals.

“Your poor ancestor, who tried to read signs of help in the night-sky, was surely developing

a condition which would subsequently prove his affinity for the lovely, the profound, and the imperishable.

“Of this truth, you yourself are the cumulative evidence,—you are really what you supposed yourself to be before you made the unhappy but very interesting discovery.”

Alvarez Lanning now, and for the first time, truly realized how very wrong would be any opposition to such reason. But Miss Ségal felt the impulse to say something more.

“My friend, if life were not characterized by aspiration and by the general upward movement, the seeming degradation of disorganized, or poorly organized material—(but you, yourself, are not an example of such organization)—would be a warranted basis for morbid belief, for ruinous discouragement. But the very chemistry of the soil is, upon the whole, favorable to man ; otherwise, he could not have risen, and further development would be impossible. So, the marvelous interchange incident to existence in general counteracts any real or fancied odium which

may be identified with common material or repulsive condition.

“On every side we may behold this law splendidly illustrated. Look up now, toward the moon, and note the beauty of those thin, bright clouds—that perfectly exquisite iridescent color !”

“How lovely ! how ethereal !”

“And yet those clouds, as mere vapor, may still bear some vanishing trace of poisonous germs,—indeed, they may still hold at least the ghost of that disagreeable odor which you so brightly (?) mentioned a few moments ago !”

“Miss Ségal, I most earnestly beg your pardon—not for perceiving it, but for speaking of it.”

“Forgiven, Mr. Lanning—I see you may now be pardoned implicitly. I am sure you will never lapse again if you will only observe the rose-plant. Its strength, gathered from low sources, arises to traverse a thorny path to higher conditions. You well know that mere words are inadequate to describe the flower—no matter what the color ! The rose ! There comes a mo-

ment when—no longer a dependent, attached to the soil—its exquisite fragrance, its paradisean soul, is cast forth free upon the air.

“Do not forget, my dear friend, that Nature holds material, as well as inspiration, for emotion, for poetry, and for psychic exploration in strange provinces. So, we may be happily anticipative, while sailing the mysterious stream, The Unknown River !”

“My dear Yetta—I—you——”

He held her to his heart, most felicitously ; he pressed kisses upon her lips, over and over.

It was their first real love scene. Our Yetta Ségal had brought the soul and body of Alvarez Lanning into harmony.

XIX.

At a splendid evening reception in Washington City, recently, an elderly gentleman stood a little apart from a large and animated group of noticeable persons. He was in so contemplative a mood as to be comfortably indifferent to the fact that his spectacles were decidedly askew, and that the President was near him, looking around with evident anxiety for hand-shakers.

For the time, this deeply abstracted person saw only with his mind. Within a few minutes, however, he aroused himself, attached his mentality to his optics, as it were, adjusted his glasses and began carefully to observe the different groups about him.

Apparently he was gratified, perhaps delighted, with that which impressed him ; for he smiled after the manner of those who smile pleasurably.

That which the observant gentleman noted,

comprised a social spectacle which is more especially characteristic of an important capital city, or a great metropolis—the occasion of international significance, the scene of extensive and pleasant cosmopolitanism.

This spectator, therefore, had opportunity to study a society of interesting complexity. It was attractive, moreover, since the assembly was composed for the most part of handsome and accomplished representatives of various nationalities and of several racial and developmental types.

Considered as an exposition of motives, it was, of course, a most inviting field for the bright student. Even a conservative philosopher could not have found it to be discouraging, upon the whole, for only a portion of all that manifest pleasure could have been identified with mere scheming or questionable motive,—on the contrary, a truly intelligent desire to please, an ethical desire to enjoy, declared itself unmistakably and quite charmingly on every side.

The quiet person, who for some time had been enjoying himself alone (on general principles),

this capable dreamer was glad to assume a livelier aspect and return the cordial greeting of certain acquaintances who, passing his way, paused for an interchange of compliments. This little party included several notable residents of Honolulu. The stateliness of the matrons and the gracefulness of the young ladies were not less remarkable for their Hawaiian lineage, which was more or less apparent. Perhaps it was the consciousness of having a distinguishing proportion of good native blood in their well-constructed veins that reassured them ; at any rate, they spoke, smiled, and otherwise expressed themselves, in the manner of serenity and propriety and womanly loveliness.

The observant gentleman, apparently, had expected to meet these travelers ; for he promptly produced a clipping from the evening newspaper and began to read some selections which were both relevant and inappropriate :

“ Some of the gentlemen of this party have fine figures . . . immensely rich . . . peculiarity of their education makes them provokingly mis-

trustful of our charitable institutions and financial methods. . . . The females are well worth seeing . . . descended from chieftains of very even disposition . . . tenacious constitutions—forefathers were looked after by formidable medicine-men . . . beauty, part wild, part tame . . . soft voices . . . large, lustrous eyes . . . ethereal locomotion, which suggests reminiscences of the gazelle.”

As the reader gave the party a look of gentle inquisitiveness, he was answered by a round of the most delightful if not delicious laughter.

“Doctor,” said one of the ladies, “I have discovered, by means of certain London journals, that a page of my ancestral history is entertaining, in a way. It shocks the English, but I feel that you Americans will not question my taste in alluding to it.”

The speaker, however, hesitated a little.

“You can proceed with confidence, my dear madame—it is probably not in any way a question of taste.”

“Yes, Doctor,” remarked a young lady, with

very promising eyes,—“mater will convince you.”

“Well, then—since I’ve known for years that you kindly excuse my faults—one of my ancestors was an Englishman, another was a Kamehameha king. One of them attempted to absorb the property of the other, but—”

“He failed in the undertaking and ran away, of course.”

“No—the other absorbed *him*!”

“Heavens! was it really the fittest who survived?”

It was a sly Hawaiian gentleman who replied: “You, Doctor, must perceive that his course, which doubtless introduced the earliest form of *race-union*, entitles—”

A half-subdued explosion of laughter shook the listeners, including the spectacled gentleman.

“I am now convinced, madame, that certain peculiar evidences of civilization have been exhibited in your family for at least one hundred and fifty years.”

After a few moments of still more profitable

conversation, these people took leave of their good friend and departed from the reception.

The evidence of his uncommon satisfaction still lingered on the open face of the quiet spectator—who, of course, was no other than Professor Skoopmen, grown a little older (but possibly not much wiser)—when he was joined by three others, two ladies and a tall gentleman of about forty, whose presence was as *distingué* as it was handsome. Those whom he escorted were the Professor's wife and his own, Mrs. Lanning—our Yetta Ségal of former years.

Mrs. Skoopmen's Occidental experiences have not failed to add to her native charms.

Mrs. Lanning is now the perfect matron, certainly not less wise, perhaps even more attractive, than at any previous time. Her individualism and her mutualism are now perfectly balanced, her life beautifully accentuated.

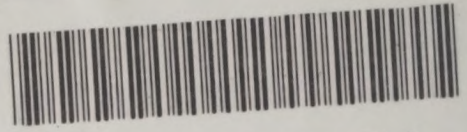
Yet those who composed this small party appeared to be in a state of more or less incompleteness, and just touched with some small anxiety. So, the hour being somewhat late, they proceeded

through the magnificent apartments, with many solicitous glances toward the younger people. They were seeking their own precious children, now grown almost to maturity.

Presently an exquisite vista disclosed the two youths—the Professor's daughter and a rare mother's son,—the couple was promenading in the almost deserted floral conservatory, now pausing to give animated attention to certain exciting exotics, now to the lovely indigenous flowers.

The parents looked upon these heirs—so wonderfully composite, so harmoniously paired—with infinite admiration; for already they had been additionally endowed with the wealth of life, and life's mystery had permitted them to be symmetrical.

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